THE

HISTORICAL ANNALS

OF

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OF

CORNELIUS TACITUS:

WITH SUPPLEMENTS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

Præcipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur, utque pravis dictis Factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.

Tacitus, Ann. III. s. 65.

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ANNALS OF TACITUS.

BOOK IV.

I. The consuls for the year, on which we are now entering, were Caius Asinius, and Caius Antistius. Tiberius had reigned nine years. During that time a state of profound tranquillity prevailed at Rome, and the emperor saw the imperial family flourishing with undiminished lustre. The loss of Germanicus gave him no regret; on the contrary, he reckoned that event among the prosperous issues of his reign. But fortune now began to change the scene, and a train of disasters followed. Tiberius threw off the mask: he harassed the people by acts of cruelty, or, which was equally oppressive, by his authority encouraged the tyranny of others. Of this revolution, Ælius Sejanus, commander of the prætorian guards was the prime and efficient cause. The power and influence of that minister have been already mentioned. I shall here give the origin of the man, the features of his character, and the flagitious arts by which he aspired to the supreme power.

He was born at Vulsinii, the son of Seius Strabo, a Roman knight. He attached himself, in his early youth, to Caius Cæsar, the grandson of Augustus. Even at that time he laboured under a suspicion of having prostituted his person to the infamous passions of Apicius, a rich and prodigal voluptuary. By various arts he afterwards gained an entire ascendant over the affections of Tiberius, insomuch that the temper of that prince, to the rest of mankind dark and inscrutable, became to him alone unclouded, free and complying. This influence, however, was not the effect of superior ability; since Sejanus, in the end, fell

a victim to the policy of that very prince, whom he deceived at first. A phenomenon so very extraordinary can be ascribed to nothing else than the wrath of the gods, incensed against the Roman state. Whether the public suffered most by the elevation, or the downfal, of that pernicious minister, it is difficult to determine. His frame of body was vigorous, robust, and patient of labour; his spirit bold and enterprising; in his own conduct a profound dissembler, and to others a sharp and dangerous accuser. With pride that swelled to arrogance, he had the meanness that could fawn and flatter; and, under the outward calm of moderation, he nourished in his heart the most unbounded ambition. Profusion, luxury, and largesses, were often his means, but more frequently application to business, and indefatigable industry; virtues that take the name of vice, when they play an underpart to inordinate passions and the lust of domination.

II. The commission over the prætorian bands had been always of a limited nature. Sejanus enlarged his powers to a degree unknown before. He had the address to collect into one camp the whole corps of the guards, till that time quartered in various parts of Rome. Being embodied, they received their orders with submission; habit and constant intercourse established a spirit of union, and, knowing their numbers, they grew formidable to their fellow citizens. The pretext of this measure was, that the soldiery grew wanton in idleness, but, when encamped, they might be drawn forth, with better effect, in any sudden emergence, and being confined within their entrenchments, at a distance from the vices of the metropolis, they would act with greater vigour whenever required. This plan being settled, Sejanus began his approaches to the affections of his soldiers: by affability and caresses, he glided into favour; he appointed the tribunes and centurions; he endeavoured to seduce the senators by corruption; he promoted his creatures, and, at his pleasure, bestowed honours and provinces. All this was done, not only with the consent, but with the most complying facility on the part of Tiberius, who now declared openly in favour of

the minister, styling him, in private conversation, his associate in the cares of government, and using the same language to the senate. Nor did he stop here; he allowed the images of his favourite to be worshipped in the theatre, in the forum, and at the head-quarters of the legions, in the place appropriated for the standards and the eagles.

III. As yet, however, the imperial family was in a flourishing state. To secure the succession there was no want of Cæsars. The emperor's son was in the pride of manhood, and his grandsons in the flower of youth. These were obstacles to the views of Sejanus. To assail them with open force, were big with danger; and fraud requires delay, and intervals of guilt. He resolved to work by stratagem. Drusus, against whom Sejanus was inflamed by recent provocations, was marked out as the first victim. It happened that Drusus, impatient of a rival, and by nature fierce, raised his hand, in some sudden dispute against Sejanus; and that haughty minister, advancing forward, received a blow on the face. Stung with indignation, he thought no expedient so sure as the gaining of the younger Livia, the wife of Drusus, to his interest. The princess was sister to Germanicus; and though in her younger days she had no elegance either of shape or feature, she was now grown up in the most perfect form of regular beauty. Sejanus made his advances with the ardour of a lover. Having triumphed over her honour, he found another step in guilt no difficult matter. A woman who has sacrificed her virtue, soon resigns every other principle. Engaged in a course of adultery, she was led by degrees to embrace the project of murdering her husband, in order to marry her paramour, and mount with him to the imperial dignity.

In this manner a woman of illustrious rank, the niece of Augustus, the daughter-in-law of Tiberius, and the mother of children by Drusus, disgraced herself, her ancestors, and her posterity, by a vile connexion with an adulterer from a municipal town; renouncing the honours which she possessed, for the uncertain prospect of flagitious grandeur. Eudemus,

the confidential friend and physician of the faithless wife, was drawn into the conspiracy. Under colour of his profession, this man had easy access to Livia. Sejanus listed him into his service; and that the harmony between himself and the adulteress might be undisturbed by jealousy, he repudiated his wife Apicata, by whom he had three children. But still the magnitude of the crime filled their minds with terror: they fluctuated between opposite counsels; they resolved, they hesitated; delay, and doubt, and confusion followed.

IV. In the beginning of this year, Drusus, the second son of Germanicus, put on the manly robe. The honours which had been decreed to his brother Nero, were renewed by a vote of the fathers. Tiberius, in a speech upon the occasion, commended the tender regard with which his son protected the children of Germanicus. The truth is, Drusus (though in high stations and among rivals sincerity is seldom found) had acquitted himself towards his nephews with all decent attention, at least without hostility. Amidst these transactions, the old project of visiting the provinces, often intimated, but never in earnest, was revived by Tiberius. For this expedition the ostensible reasons were, the number of veterans entitled to their dismission from the service, and the necessity of recruiting the army with effective men. Of such as voluntarily offered, the number he said was small, and even of those the greatest part were a set of distressed and profligate vagabonds, destitute of courage, and strangers to military discipline. He added a list of Roman legions, specifying the provinces where they were stationed. A review of that estimate will not be useless, or unacceptable, since it will exhibit the national strength at that period, the kings in alliance with Rome, and the narrow limits of the empire, compared with the extent to which they have been since enlarged.

V. In the seas that on each side wash the coast of Italy, two fleets were stationed; one at Misenum, the other at Ravenna. The maritime parts of Gaul, adjacent to Italy, were guarded by the large galleys,

which were taken at the battle of Actium, and sent by Augustus to Forojulium, well provided with able seamen. But the chief strength of the empire was on the Rhine, consisting of eight legions, to bridle at once the Germans and the Gauls. Spain, lately subdued, was held in subjection by three legions. Juba reigned in Mauritania, deriving his title from the favour of Rome. The rest of Africa was kept in awe by two legions. A like number served in Egypt. In that vast extent of country, which stretches from Syria to the Euphrates, bordering on the confines of Iberia, Albania, and other states under the protection of the Roman arms, four legions maintained the rights of the empire. Thrace was governed by Rhæmetalces and the sons of Cotys. The banks of the Danube were secured by four legions, two to Pannonia, and two in Mæsia. Two more were stationed in Dalmatia, in a situation, if war broke out at their back, to support the other legions; or if a sudden emergence required their presence, ready to advance by rapid marches into Italy. Rome at the same time had her own peculiar forces, namely, three city cohorts and nine of the prætorian bands raised for the most part in Etruria, Umbria, ancient Latium, and the colonies of the republic. To this national strength must be added the naval armaments of the allies, placed at proper stations, together with their infantry and cavalry, forming, in the whole, a body of troops, not inferior in number to the Roman army. But of the foreign auxiliaries it is impossible to speak with precision. They were shifted from place to place, with numbers now augmented, and now reduced, as occasion required; and, by consequence, an accurate estimate can not be expected.

VI. To this survey of the empire if we add a view of the constitution, and the manner in which the government was administered by Tiberius, from the beginning of his reign to the present year, the fatal era of tyranny and oppression, the inquiry will not be foreign to our purpose. In the first place, not only the affairs of state, but all questions of importance between the citizens of Rome, were referred to the wisdom of the senate. The leading members of that

assembly claimed and exercised full freedom of debate: and when they deviated into flattery, the prince was sure to reject the nauseous strain. In dispensing the honours of government, he had an eye to nobility of birth, to personal merit, and to talents as well civil as military. His choice, it was generally agreed, was made with judgment. The consuls and the prætors enjoyed the ancient honours of their rank and dignity. The subordinate magistrates exercised their functions without control. The laws, if we except those of violated majesty, flowed in their regular channel. The tributes and duties, whether of corn or money, were managed by commissioners chosen from the Roman knights. The revenues appropriated to the prince were conducted by men of distinguished probity, and frequently by such as were known to Tiberius by their character only. Being once appointed, they were never removed. Several, it is well known, grew gray in the same employment. The people, it is true, often complained of the price of corn; but the grievance was not imputable to the emperor. To prevent the consequences of unproductive seasons, or losses at sea, he spared neither money nor attention. In the provinces no new burdens were imposed, and the old duties were collected without cruelty or extortion. Corporeal punishment was never inflicted, and confiscation of men's effects was a thing unknown.

VII. In Italy the land-property of the emperor was inconsiderable. Good order prevailed among his slaves. His freemen were few, and his household was managed with economy. In all questions of right between the emperor and individuals, the courts of justice were open, and the law decided. And yet to this equitable system he did not know how to add a gracious manner. The austerity of his countenance struck men with terror. He continued, however, in the practice of rigid, though not amiable, manners, till the death of Drusus. While that prince survived, Sejanus thought it prudent to advance by slow degrees. He dreaded the resentment of a young man, who did not seek to disguise his passions, but

complained aloud, "that the emperor, though he had "a son to succeed him, preferred a stranger to a share "in the administration. How little was that upstart "minister removed from being a colleague in the em- "pire! The road of ambition is at first a steep ascent; but "the difficulty once surmounted, the passions of de- "signing men list in the enterprise, and tools and agents "are ready at hand. The favourite is already master "of a camp, and the soldiers wait his nod. Among the "monuments of Pompey we behold his statue: the "grand-children of this new man will be allied in blood "to the family of Drusus. What remains, but humbly "to hope that he will have the modesty to stop in his "career, content with what he has already gained?" Such was the discourse of Drusus, not occasional, but constant; not in private circles, but at large, and without reserve. His inmost secrets were also known: his wife had forfeited her honour, and was now a spy upon her husband.

VIII. In this posture of affairs, Sejanus thought he had no time to lose. He chose a poison, which, operating as a slow corrosive, might bring on the symptoms of a natural disorder. Lygdus the eunuch (as was discovered eight years afterwards,) administered the draught. While Drusus lay ill, Tiberius, never seeming to be in any degree alarmed, or, it may be, willing to make a display of magnanimity, went as usual to the senate. Even after the prince expired, and before the funeral ceremony was performed, he entered the assembly of the fathers. Perceiving the consuls, with dejected looks, seated on the ordinary benches, like men who mourned for the public loss, he put them in mind of their dignity, and their proper station. The senate melted into tears: but Tiberius, superior to the weakness of nature, delivered an animated speech, in a flowing style, and a tone of firmness. "He was not," he said, "to be informed that "his appearance might be thought unseasonable in the "moment of recent affliction, when, according to the "general custom, the mind, enfeebled with sorrow, can "scarce endure the consolation of friends and almost "loathes the light of the sun. Those tender emotions

"were the condition of humanity, and, therefore, not to "be condemned. For his part, he sought a manly re- "medy; in the embraces of the commonwealth, and in "the bosom of the fathers, he came to lay down his "sorrows. He lamented the condition of his mother, "drooping under the infirmities of age, the tender "years of his grandsons, and his own situation, now in "the decline of life. The children of Germanicus, in "the present distress, were the only remaining hopes "of the people. He desired that they might be brought "before the fathers."

The consuls went forth to meet the princes. Having prepared their tender minds for so august a scene, they presented them to the emperor. Tiberius, taking them by the hand, addressed the senate: "These or- "phans, conscript fathers, I delivered into the care of "their uncle; and, though he was blessed with issue, I "desired that he would cherish them as his own, and "train them up in a manner worthy of himself and of "posterity. But Drusus is no more: I now turn to you, "and, in the presence of the gods, in the hearing of my "country I implore you, take under your protection "the great grandchildren of Augustus; adopt the issue "of an illustrious line; support them, mould them at "your pleasure for the good of the state; perform at "once my duty and your own. As for you, Nero, and "you, Drusus, in this assembly you behold your fa- "thers: born as you are in the highest station, your "lot is such, that nothing good or evil can befal you, "without affecting, at the same time, the interest of "the commonwealth."

IX. This speech drew tears from the whole assembly: vows and supplications followed. Had Tiberius known where to stop, instead of adding what exceeded the bounds of probability, every heart would have been touched with sympathy, and every mind impressed with the glory of the prince. But by recurring to the stale and chimerical project, so often heard with derision, the project of abdicating the sovereignty, and resigning the reins of government to the consuls, or any other person willing to undertake the task, he weakened the force of sentiments in

themselves just and honourable. The solemnities which had been decreed to the memory of Germanicus, were renewed in honour of Drusus, with considerable additions, agreeable to the genius of flattery, always studious of novelty. The funeral ceremony was distinguished by a long train of illustrious images. In the procession were seen Æncas, the father of the Julian race: the Alban kings; Romulus, the founder of Rome; the Sabine nobility, with Attus Clausus at their head, and from him the whole line of the Claudian family.

X. In this account of the death of Drusus, the best and most authentic historians have been my guides. A report, however, which gained credit at the time, and has not yet died away, ought not to be omitted. It was currently said, that Sejanus, having gained the person and the heart of Livia, proceeded to a fouler intrigue with Lygdus the eunuch, and by an infamous amour, drew to his interest that tool of iniquity, who was one of the domestic attendants of Drusus, and, for his youth and the graces of his person, high in favour with his master. The time and place for administering the poison being settled by the conspirators, Sejanus had the hardihood to change his plan. He contrived by secret insinuations, to charge Drusus with a plot against his father's life, and dared to whisper a caution to Tiberius, not to taste the first cup that should be offered to him at his son's table. Deceived by this stroke of perfidy, the old man received the cup, and presented it to his son. The prince, with the frankness and gaiety of youth, drank it off: but that alacrity served only to confirm the suspicion entertained by the emperor. His conclusion was, that Drusus, overwhelmed with fear and shame, was in haste to give himself the death, which he had prepared for his father.

XI. A report of this kind, current among the populace, but unsupported by any good authority, can not stand the test of examination. What man of plain common sense, not to speak of a consummate statesman, like Tiberius, would present inevitable death to his only son, without so much as hearing

him, and thus precipitately commit a fatal deed, never to be recalled? Would it not have been more natural to put the cup-bearer to the torture? Why not inquire who mixed the liquor? Above all, is it probable that Tiberius, ever slow and indecisive, would at once forget the habits of his nature, and, in the case of an only son, a son too never charged with any crime, act with a degree of rashness, which he had never practised to the remotest stranger? The truth is, Sejanus was known to be capable of every species of villany, however atrocious: the partiality of the emperor increased the number of his enemies; and, both the sovereign and the favourite being objects of public detestation, malignity itself could frame no tale so black, and even improbable, that men were not willing to believe.

The death of princes is always variously reported, and common fame is sure to add a tragic catastrophe. Some years afterwards, the particulars of the murder were brought to light by Apicata, the widow of Sejanus, and confirmed by Eudemus and Lygdus on the rack. In the number of historians, who were envenomed against Tiberius, and with diligence collected anecdotes to wage eternal war against his memory, not one has gone so far as to impute to him a share in this foul transaction. The story, however, such as it is, I have represented in its native colours, willing to flatter myself that, by so glaring an instance, I may destroy the credit of fabulous narrations, and prevail with the reader, into whose hands this work may fall, not to prefer the fictions of romance, however greedily swallowed by vulgar credulity, to the precision of sober history.

XII. Tiberius, in a public speech, delivered the funeral panegyric of his son. The senate and the people attended in their mourning garments; but their grief was mere outward show, the effects of dissimulation, not of sentiment. They rejoiced in secret, conceiving that from this event the house of Germanicus would begin to flourish. But the dawn of happiness was soon overclouded. The exultation of the people, and the indiscretion of Agrippina, who

had not the policy to suppress the emotions of her heart, accelerated her own ruin, and that of her sons. Emboldened by success, Sejanus was ready to go forward in guilt. He saw the murder of Drusus pass with impunity, and even without a sign of public regret. Successful villany inspired him with new courage. He saw that the sons of Germanicus were the presumptive heirs of Tiberius, and for that reason began to plot their destruction. Being three in number, they could not all be taken off by poison, while a set of faithful attendants watched them with a vigilant eye, and the virtue of Agrippina was impregnable.

That very virtue was, therefore, to be turned against her. Sejanus called it pride and contumacy. By repeated invectives, he roused the inveterate hatred of the elder Livia; and the younger of the name, so recently an accomplice in the murder of Drusus, was easily induced to join in a second conspiracy. They represented Agrippina to Tiberius as a woman proud of her children, intoxicated with popularity, and of a spirit to engage in any dangerous enterprise. The widow of Drusus knew how to choose fit agents for her purpose. Among her instruments of iniquity was Julius Posthumus, a man high in favour with the elder Livia. He had been for some time engaged in an adulterous commerce with Mutilia Prisca, and, through her influence, was graciously received at court. By his subtle practices, and the whispers conveyed by Prisca, the old woman, naturally fond of power, and jealous of every rival, was easily inflamed against her grandaughter. At the same time, such of Agrippina's attendants as had easy access to her presence, were instructed to choose, in conversation with their mistress, the topics most likely to exasperate a mind fierce with pride, and ready to take fire on every occasion.

XIII. Meanwhile, Tiberius, hoping to find in business some respite from the anxieties of his heart, attended to the administration of justice in all disputes between the citizens of Rome. He likewise heard petitions from the provinces and the allies. At his

desire, the cities of Cybria in Asia, and Ægium in Achaia, which had suffered by an earthquake, were exempted from their usual tribute for three years. Vibius Serenus, proconsul of the farther Spain, was found guilty of oppression in the course of his administration, and being a man of savage manners, banished to the Isle of Amorgos. Carsius Sacerdos, accused of having supplied Tacfarinas with corn, was tried and acquitted. Caius Gracchus was charged with the same crime, and in like manner declared innocent. He had been carried in his infancy to the Isle of Cercina by Sempronius Gracchus, his father, who was condemned to banishment. In that place, amidst a crew of outlaws and abandoned fugitives, he grew up in ignorance. To gain a livelihood, he became a dealer in petty merchandise on the coast of Africa and Sicily. His obscurity, however, did not shelter him from the dangers of a higher station. Innocent as he was, if Ælius Lamia and Lucius Apronius, formerly proconsuls of Africa, had not espoused his cause, he must have sunk under the weight of the prosecution, a sacrifice to the splendid name of his family, and the misfortunes of his father.

XIV. In the course of the year, deputations from Greece, on the old subject of sanctuaries, were heard before the senate. The people of Samos claimed an ancient privilege for the temple of Juno; and those of Coos, for that of Æsculapius. The former relied on a decree of the Amphictyons, the court of supreme authority, at the time when colonies from Greece were in possession of the maritime parts of Asia. The deputies from Coos had also their ancient precedents, besides a claim founded on their own peculiar merit. In the general massacre of the Roman citizens throughout Asia and the isles adjacent, committed by order of Mithridates, they gave a refuge to numbers in the temple of Æsculapius. This business being over, the complaint against the licentiousness of stage-players, often urged by the prætors, and always without effect, was taken up by Tiberius. He stated, "that the people of that profession were guilty of se-"ditious practices, and in many instances, corrupted

"the morals of private families. The buffoonery of "the Oscan farce, which in its origin afforded but "little pleasure even to the dregs of the people, was "now grown to such a height of depravity, as well "as credit, that the mischief called for the interposi-"tion of the senate." The players were banished out of Italy.

XV. Tiberius felt this year two severe strokes of affliction: he lost one of the twin sons of Drusus, and also his intimate friend Lucilius Longus, a man connected with him in the closest friendship; in all scenes, either of good or adverse fortune, his faithful companion, and of all the senators, the only one that followed him in his retreat to the isle of Rhodes. Though of no distinction, and in fact a new man, his funeral was performed with the pomp belonging to the censorial order; and a statue was decreed to his memory in the Forum of Augustus, at the public expense. All business was, at this time, still transacted in the senate. The forms of the constitution remained; and accordingly Lucilius Capito, who had been collector of the imperial revenues in Asia, was brought to his trial before the fathers, at the suit of the province. Tiberius thought proper to declare, "that the "commission granted to the accused, extended only "to the slaves and revenues of the prince. Should it "appear that he assumed the prætorian authority, "and, to support his usurpation, called in the aid of "the military, he went beyond the line of his duty; "and, in that case, the allegations of the province "ought to be heard." The business came to a hearing, and Capito was condemned. The cities of Asia, to mark their sense of this act of justice, and their gratitude for the punishment of Caius Silanus in the preceding year, voted a statue to Tiberius, to Livia, and the senate. They applied to the fathers for their consent, and succeeded. Nero, in the name of the province, returned thanks to the senate and his grandfather. He was heard with pleasure by the whole audience. Germanicus was still present to their minds; and, in the son, men fancied that they saw and heard the father. The figure of the young prince was interesting. An

air of modesty, united to the dignity of his person, charmed every eye; and the well-known animosity of Sejanus engaged all hearts in his favour.

XVI. About this time the office of high priest of Jupiter became vacant by the death of Servius Maluginensis. Tiberius, in a speech to the senate, proposed that they should proceed to the choice of a successor, and at the same time pass a new law to regulate that business for the future. The custom had been to name three patricians, descended from a marriage, contracted according to the rites of CONFARREATION. Out of the number so proposed, one was to be elected. "But this mode was no longer in use. The ceremony "of confarreation was grown obsolete, or, if observed, "it was by a few families only. Of this alteration "many causes might be assigned; and chiefly the in- "attention of both sexes to the interests of religion. "The ceremonies, it is true, are attended with some "difficulty; and for that reason they are fallen into "disuse. Besides this, the priest so chosen was no "longer subject to paternal authority; and the wo- "man, who gave him her hand in marriage, was en- "titled to the same exemption. To remedy these in- "conveniences, a law is necessary. Many customs that "held too much of the rigour of antiquity, were new "modelled by Augustus in conformity to the polished "manners of the times."

After due deliberation it was thought advisable by the fathers to leave the priesthood on its old establishment, without innovation. With regard to the priestess, a new law took place. In her religious functions, it was declared, that she should be in the power of her husband only, subject in all other respects to the laws of her sex, without any privilege to distinguish her from other women. The son of Maluginensis succeeded to his father. In order to give new weight and consideration to the sacerdotal order, and to inspire the ministers of the altar with zeal for the sacred rites, a grant of two thousand great sesterces was ordered for Cornelia, the vestal virgin, who was at this time chosen superior of the order, in the room of Scantia. In compliment to Livia, it was further

decreed, that, whenever she visited the theatre, her seat should be among the vestal virgins.

XVII. In the consulship of Cornelius Cethegus and Visellius Varro, the pontiffs, and, after their example, the other orders of the priesthood, thought proper to blend with the solemn vows which they offered for the safety of the emperor, the names of Nero and Drusus. Zeal for the young princes was not altogether their motive: they had an indirect design to pay their court. But in that age the safe line of conduct was not easily settled. To abstain from flattery was dangerous; and to be lavish of it, provoked contempt, and even resentment. Tiberius, never friendly to the house of Germanicus, saw with indignation two boys exalted to a level with himself. He ordered the pontiffs to attend him. In the interview that followed, he desired to know whether, in what they had done, they complied either with the solicitations or the menaces of Agrippina. Being answered in the negative, he dismissed them with a reprimand, but in gentle terms, most of the order being either his relations, or the first men in Rome. Not content, however, with expressing his disapprobation in private, he desired, in a speech to the senate, that all might be upon their guard, not to inflame the minds of the young men with ideas of power, and, by consequence, with a spirit above their station. Sejanus was the prompter in this business. He had the ear of the emperor, and filled him with apprehensions that Rome was divided into factions, inflamed against each other with no less fury than if they were actually engaged in a civil war. There were those, he said, who called themselves the partisans of Agrippina: if not suppressed, they would in time become too powerful. To check the growing discord, there was nothing left but to cut off one or two of the most active leaders.

XVIII. The first blow was struck at Caius Silius and Titius Sabinus. Their connexion with Germanicus was their crime; but Silius was obnoxious for various reasons. He had been, during a space of seven years, at the head of a powerful army; by his conduct

in Germany he had gained triumphal ornaments; he conquered Sacrovir, and quelled the insurrection in Gaul. Falling from that elevation, his ruin would resound far and wide, and spread a general terror. His own indiscretion was thought at the time to have incensed Tiberius, and, by consequence, it provoked his fate. Success inspired him with vain-glory. He boasted, that the army under his command continued in firm fidelity, while sedition raised her standard in every other camp; and if the spirit of revolt had reached his legions, the imperial dignity would have tottered on the head of the prince. Tiberius took the alarm: he thought his own importance lessened, and his fortune, great as it was, unable to recompense such extraordinary services. He felt himself under obligations to his officer; and obligations (such is the nature of the human mind) are only then acknowledged, when it is in our power to requite them: if they exceed all measure, to be insolvent is painful, and gratitude gives way to hatred.

XIX. Sosia Galla, the wife of Silius, was closely connected with Agrippina, and, for that reason, detested by Tiberius. She and her husband were doomed to fall an immediate sacrifice. Sabinus was reserved for a future day. Against the two former, Varro, the consul, undertook the despicable part of public prosecutor. Pretending to adopt the resentments of his father, he became the servile agent of Sejanus. Silius requested that the trial might be deferred, till the consul, now turned accuser, should cease to be in office. Though the interval was short, Tiberius opposed the motion, alleging, that men were frequently arraigned by the other magistrates; and why abridge the authority of the consul? It is his duty to take care that the commonwealth may receive no injury. Such was the state-craft of Tiberius: to crimes invented by himself he gave the old republican names, and by that artifice amused the public.

The senate was summoned with regular solemnity, as if the proceeding was to be according to law; as if Varro was, in truth, acting the part of consul, and in the reign of Tiberius the constitution still remained in

vigour. Silius made no defence. He broke silence, indeed, at different times, but merely to show that he saw in what quarter the arm of oppression was raised against him. The heads of the accusation were, that, in a dark conspiracy with Sacrovir, he concealed the machinations of that insurgent; that his victory was tarnished by cruelty, and that, with his connivance, acts of rapacity and oppression were committed by his wife. The last article was too well founded; but the prosecution went altogether on the crime of violated majesty. Silius saw that his doom was fixed, and, to prevent final judgment, put an end to his life.

XX. The law, notwithstanding, laid hold of his effects; not however to make restitution to the Gauls; for the Gauls made no claim. The whole of what the unhappy victim had received from the bounty of Augustus, after an exact estimate made, was seized, and carried into the treasury of the prince. In this instance, Tiberius, for the first time, looked with the eye of avarice on the property of others. On the motion of Asinius Gallus, Sosia was ordered into exile. By that senator it was further proposed, that part of her effects should be confiscated, and the remainder given to her children. Manius Lepidus contended, that one fourth should go, as the law directed, to the prosecutors, and the residue to her children. This sentence prevailed. It is but justice to the character of Lepidus, to observe in this place, that, considering the times in which he lived, he appears to have been a man of ability, temperate, wise and upright. The violent measures often proposed by others, always the result of servile adulation, were, by his address, frequently rejected, altered, or modified, with so much good sense and temper, that he preserved at once his credit at court, and the esteem of the public.

This happiness, so singular, and so fairly enjoyed, arrests our attention, and naturally raises an inquiry, whether the favour or antipathy of princes, like all other sublunary contingencies, is governed by the immutable laws of fate; and, by consequence, the lot of man may be said to be determined in his natal hour. The question is intricate; but perhaps free will and

moral agency are still so far allowed, that each individual may chalk out the line of his own conduct, and, by steering between the opposite extremes of blunt austerity and abject meanness, pursue a middle course with safety and with honour. Messalinus Cotta, a man equal in point of birth to Manius Lepidus, but of a very different character, moved for a decree, declaring that all magistrates, however blameless in their own conduct, and even ignorant of the guilt of others, should, notwithstanding, be responsible for the unlawful acts committed in the provinces by their wives.

XXI. The business brought forward in the next place, was the charge against Calpurnius Piso, that illustrious citizen, distinguished not more by the nobility of his birth, than by his unshaken virtue, who, as has been related, threatened a secession from Rome, in order to find, in some remote place, a shelter from the vices of the age, and the harpies of the law. It may be remembered, likewise, that, in the cause against Urgulania, he scorned to yield to the weight and influence of the emperor's mother, but cited the defendant from the very palace of the prince. His conduct, at that time, was treated by Tiberius as the exercise of a civil right; but in a mind like his, that which at first made a slight impression, was sure to be embittered by reflection. Quintus Granius was the prosecutor of Piso. He exhibited an accusation for words spoken in private against the majesty of the emperor; for keeping poison in his house; and entering the senate with a concealed dagger. The two last articles, too gross to be believed, were thrown out of the case. Other allegations were heaped together to swell the charge; and Piso, it was determined, was to be brought to his trial: but a natural death put an end to the prosecution.

A new complaint was presented to the senate against Cassius Severus, a man of mean extraction, void of principle, profligate in his manners, but an orator of considerable eloquence. He had been, by a judgment, pronounced under the sanction of an oath, condemned to exile in the Isle of Crete. Persisting there in his licentious practices, he rekindled the in-

dignation of the fathers, and by new vices provoked new enemies. Stripped of all his effects, and interdicted from fire and water, he was removed to the Isle of Seriphos, where, in old age and misery, he languished on the rocks.

XXII. About this time Plautius Silvanus, one of the prætors, impelled by some secret motive, threw his wife Apronia out of the window of her apartment, and killed her on the spot. Being immediately seized by his father-in-law, Lucius Apronius, and conveyed to the presence of the emperor, he made answer, with an air of distraction, that while he lay asleep, his wife committed that act of violence. Tiberius went directly to the house. He examined the apartment, and saw evident signs of a person who had struggled, but was overcome by force. He made his report to the senate, and commissioners were appointed to inquire and pronounce their judgment. Urgulania, the grandmother of Silvanus, sent a dagger to him as her best present. This, on account of her known intimacy with Livia, was supposed to proceed from Tiberius. The criminal, after attempting, but with irresolution, to apply the dagger to his breast, ordered his veins to be opened. In a short time afterwards Numantina, his former wife, was accused of having, by drugs and magic spells, distempered his brain. She was acquitted of the charge.

XXIII. The war with Tacfarinas, the Numidian, by which Rome had been long embroiled, was this year happily terminated. The former commanders, as soon as they had laid a foundation for the obtaining of triumphal ornaments, considered this business as finished and gave the enemy time to breathe. There were at Rome no less than three statues decorated with laurel, and yet Tacfarinas ravaged the province. He was reinforced by the neighbouring Moors, who saw with indignation their new king, Ptolemy, the son of Juba, resign, with youthful inexperience, the reins of government to his freedmen. The malcontents of that nation went over to the banners of Tacfarinas, determined to try the fortune of war, rather than tamely submit to the tyranny of enfranchised slaves. The king of the Garamantes en-

tered into a secret league with the Numidian. Not choosing to take the field at the head of his forces, he helped to carry on a war of depredation. His dominions were a depository for all their plunder. His troops went out in detached parties, and, as is usual in all distant commotions, were magnified by the voice of fame into a prodigious army. Even from the Roman province, all who struggled with want, or by their crimes were rendered desperate, went over to Tacfarinas. A recent incident encouraged the revolt. In consequence of the success of Blæsus, Tiberius, thinking the war at an end, ordered the ninth legion to be recalled. Dolabella, the proconsul for the year, saw the inexpedience of the measure; but dreading the anger of Tiberius more than the incursions of the enemy, he did not venture, even for the defence of the province, to detain the troops.

XXIV. Tacfarinas, availing himself of this circumstance, spread a rumour round the country, that the Roman empire, being invaded on every side, Africa, by degrees, was to be evacuated, and the remainder of the legions might be easily cut off, if all who preferred their liberty to ignominious bondage, would take up arms in defence of their country. He gained, by these artifices, a new accession of strength, and laid seige to the city of Thubuscum. Dolabella, with what force he could collect, marched to the relief of the place. The terror of the Roman name was on his side, and the affair was with an enemy, who could never sustain the shock of a well-embodied infantry. He no sooner showed himself in force, than the Numidian abandoned the siege. Dolabella, at all convenient places fortified his posts, and stationed garrisons to secure the country. Finding the Musulanians on the point of a revolt, he seized their chiefs, and ordered their heads to be struck off. Experience had taught him, that a regular army, encumbered with baggage, could give but a bad account of a wild and desultory enemy, who made war by sudden incursions, and avoided a decisive action: he therefore resolved to vary his operations, and having called to his aid the young king Ptolemy, at the head of a large

body of his subjects, he divided his army into four detached parties, under the command of his lieutenants, and the military tribunes. A chosen band of Moors, conducted by officers of that nation, had orders to ravage the country. The proconsul marched himself in person, ready at hand to direct the motions of his army, and give vigour to the enterprise.

XXV. Intelligence was brought soon after, that the Numidians, depending upon the advantages of a situation encompassed by a depth of forests, had pitched their huts near the ruins of a castle, called Auzea, which they had formerly destroyed by fire. The cavalry and light cohorts, ignorant of their destination, were sent forward without delay. They made a forced march in the night, and at break of day arrived before the place. The barbarians, scarce awake, were alarmed on every side with warlike shouts and the clangour of trumpets. Their horses were either fastened to stakes, or let loose to wander on the pasture grounds. The Romans advanced in order of battle, their infantry in close array, and the cavalry prepared for action. The barbarians were taken by surprise, no arms at hand, no order, no concerted measure. They were attacked without delay, and like a herd of cattle, mangled, butchered, taken. The Roman soldiers, fierce with resentment for all their toil and fatigues, rushed with fury against an enemy, who had so often fled from their sword. The victorious troops were glutted with Numidian blood. The word was given through the ranks, that Tacfarinas was the proper object of their vengeance; his person was well known; his death, and nothing less, could end the war. That daring adventurer saw his guards fall on every side. His son was already in fetters, and he himself hemmed in by the Romans. In despair he rushed forward, where the shower of darts was thickest, and selling his life at the dearest rate, had the glory of dying in freedom. This event quieted the commotions in Africa.

XXVI. For these services Dolabella expected triumphal ornaments: but Tiberius, apprehending that Sejanus would think the honours granted to his uncle

Blæsus, tarnished by the success of a rival, refused to comply with the request. Blæsus gained no addition to his fame, while that of Dolabella grew brighter by injustice. With an inferior army, he had taken a number of prisoners, among whom were the leading chiefs of the nations; and, by the death of Tacfarinas, he put an end to the war. At his return from Africa, he gave a spectacle rarely seen at Rome, a train of ambassadors from the Garamantes! The people of that country, conscious of their guilt, and by the death of the Numidian chief thrown into consternation, sent their deputies to appease the resentment of the emperor. The services of the king Ptolemy being stated to the senate, an ancient custom, long since fallen into disuse, was revived in honour of that monarch. The fathers sent a member of their body, to present an ivory sceptre and a painted robe, the ancient gifts to kings, with instructions, at the same time, to salute young Ptolemy by the titles of KING, ALLY, and FRIEND OF THE ROMAN PEOPLE.

XXVII. During the same summer, a servile war was ready to break out in Italy; but, by a fortunate accident, the flame was soon extinguished. The incendiary, who excited the commotion, was formerly a soldier in the prætorian bands, by name Titus Curtisius. This man began his seditious practices in private cabals at Brundusium, and the adjacent towns. Having made his impression, he went the length of fixing up in public places seditious libels, inviting the agrarian slaves to issue from their woods and wilds, and take up arms in the cause of liberty. It happened, however, that three galleys, employed in the navigation of those seas, arrived providentially on the coast. Curtius Lupus, the quæstor, whose province it was, according to ancient usage, to superintend the roads through the forests, was, at that time, in the neighbourhood. He ordered the mariners to be landed, and, putting himself at their head, crushed the conspiracy in the bud. Statius, a military tribune, had been, on the first alarm, dispatched by Tiberius with a strong band of soldiers. He arrived in good time, and, having seized the chief conspirators with

their leader, returned to Rome, with his prisoners bound in chains. The capital, at that time, was far from being in a state of tranquillity. Men saw, with terror, a vast multitude of slaves increasing beyond all proportion, while the number of freeborn citizens was visibly on the decline.

XXVIII. During the same consulship, a scene of horror, that gave a shock to nature, and marked the cruelty of the times, was acted in the face of the world. A father pleaded for his life, while the son stood forth the accuser. The name of each was Vibius Serenus. They appeared before the senate. The father had been banished. He was now dragged from his retreat, deformed with filth, and loaded with irons; a spectacle of misery. The son came forward in trim apparel, ease in his mien, and alacrity in his countenance. He charged the old man with a conspiracy against the life of the emperor, and with sending emissaries into Gaul to kindle the flame of rebellion; and thus the son acted in a double character, at once the accuser and the witness. He added, that Cæcilius Cornutus, of prætorian rank, supplied the accomplices with money. Cornutus, weary of life, and knowing that a prosecution was a prelude to destruction, laid violent hands on himself. Serenus, on the contrary, with a spirit undismayed, fixed his eye on his son, and clanking his chains, exclaimed, "Restore me, just and vindictive "gods! restore me to my place of banishment, far "from the sight of men, who suffer such an outrage "to humanity. For that parricide, may your ven- "geance, in due time, overtake his guilt." He pronounced Cornutus an innocent man, but destitute of courage, weak and easily alarmed. He desired that the confederates in the plot might be named, and by a minute inquiry, the truth, he said, would be brought to light. "For can it be, that, with only one accom- "plice, I should undertake to imbrue my hands in the "blood of the emperor, and to overturn the govern- "ment?"

XXIX The informer gave in the names of Cneius Lentulus and Seius Tubero. The mention of those men threw Tiberius into confusion. They were both

of illustrious rank, both his intimate friends. That Lentulus, in the evening of his days, and Tubero, drooping under bodily infirmity, should be charged with meditating an insurrection in Gaul, and a conspiracy against the state, made a deep impression on his spirits. Against them no further inquiry was made. The slaves of the aged father were examined on the rack, and by their testimony, every allegation was refuted. The son, overwhelmed with a sense of his guilt, and terrified by the indignation of the populace, who threatened the dungeon, the Tarpeian rock, and all the pains and penalties of parricide, made his escape from Rome. He was retaken at Ravenna, and carried back to proceed in his accusation, and gratify the spleen of Tiberius, who hated the old man, and, upon this occasion, did not disguise his rancour. Vibius, it seems, soon after the condemnation of Libo, complained by letter, to the emperor, that his services in that business had not been duly recompensed. The style of his remonstrance was more free and bold than can with safety be addressed to the proud ear of power, at all times sensibly alive to every expression, and easily alarmed. At the distance of eight years Tiberius showed that he had been ruminating mischief. The intermediate time, he said, though no proof could be extorted from the slaves, was passed by the prisoner in a continued series of atrocious crimes.

XXX. The question being put, the majority was for a capital punishment, according to the rigour of ancient law. Tiberius, to soften popular prejudice, opposed so harsh a sentence. Asinius Gallus moved that Serenus should be banished to the Isle of Gyarus or Donusa. This also was opposed by the emperor. In those islands there was a dearth of water; and when life is granted, the means of supporting it ought to follow. The old man was remanded to the island of Amorgos. As Cornutus had despatched himself, a motion was made, that whenever the person accused of violated majesty, prevented judgment by a voluntary death, the informers should be entitled to no reward. The fathers inclined to that opinion; but Tiberius, in plain terms, without his usual ambi

guity, showed himself the patron of the whole race of informers. "The course of justice," he said, "would be stopt, and by such a decision, the common-"wealth would be brought to the brink of ruin. It "were better to abrogate all laws at once. If we must "have laws, let us not remove the vigilance that gives "them energy." In this manner that pernicious crew, the bane and scourge of society, who, in fact, have never been effectually restrained, were now let loose, with the wages of iniquity in view, to harass and destroy their fellow citizens.

XXXI. Through the cloud of these tempestuous times a gleam of joy broke forth. Caius Cominius, a Roman knight, was convicted for being the author of defamatory verses against the emperor; but at the intercession of his brother, a member of the senate, Tiberius pardoned the offence. This act of lenity, standing in contrast to a series of evil deeds, made men wonder, that he, who knew the fair renown that waits on the virtues of humanity, should persevere in the practice of cruelty and oppression. Want of discernment was not among the faults of Tiberius; nor was he misled by the applause of temporizing courtiers. Between the praise which adulation offers, and that which flows from sentiment, a mind like his could easily distinguish. His own manner marked his sense of good and evil. Though close and guarded on most occasions, even to a degree of hesitation, it was remarkable, that, when he meant a generous act, his language was fluent, clear, and unequivocal.

In a matter that came on soon after, against Publius Suilius, formerly quæstor under Germanicus, and now convicted of bribery in a cause where he sat in judgment, the emperor, not content with a general sentence of banishment out of Italy, insisted that he ought to be confined to an island. This decision he urged in a tone of vehemence, averring, with the solemnity of an oath, that the interest of the commonwealth required it. And yet this proceeding, condemned at the time, as harsh and violent, was, in a subsequent reign, allowed to be founded in justice. Suilius was recalled by Claudius. He then announced

his real character; proud, imperious, corrupt and venal; high in favour with the reigning prince, and using his influence for the worst of purposes. Catus Firmius was, in like manner, condemned on a charge of having maliciously accused his sister on the law of majesty. It was this man, as has been related, who first deceived the unsuspecting Libo, and then betrayed him to his ruin. For that sacrifice of all truth and honour, Tiberius was not ungrateful. To reward his services, yet pretending to act with other motives, he overruled the sentence of banishment, but agreed that he should be expelled the senate.

XXXII. The transactions hitherto related, and those which are to follow, may, I am well aware, be thought of little importance, and beneath the dignity of history. But no man, it is presumed, will think of comparing these annals with the historians of the old republic. Those writers had for their subject, wars of the greatest magnitude; cities taken by storm; kings overthrown, or led in captivity to Rome: and when from those scenes of splendour they turned their attention to domestic occurrences, they had still an ample field before them; they had dissensions between the consuls and the tribunes; they had agrarian laws, the price of corn, and the populace and patrician order inflamed with mutual animosity. Those were objects that filled the imagination of the reader, and gave free scope to the genius of the writer. The work in which I am engaged, lies in a narrow compass; the labour is great, and glory there is none. A long and settled calm, scarce lifted to a tempest; wars no sooner begun than ended; a gloomy scene at home, and a prince without ambition, or even a wish to enlarge the boundaries of the empire: these are the scanty materials that lie before me. And yet materials like these are not to be undervalued; though slight in appearance, they still merit attention, since they are often the secret spring of the most important events.

XXXIII. If we consider the nature of civil government, we shall find, that, in all nations, the supreme authority is vested either in the people, or the nobles,

or a single ruler. A constitution compounded of these three simple forms, may in theory be beautiful, but can never exist in fact; or, if it should, it will be but of short duration. At Rome, while the republic flourished, and the senate and the people gained alternate victories over each other, it was the business of the true politician, to study the manners and tempers of the multitude, in order to restrain within due bounds a tumultuous and discordant mass; and, on the other hand, he who best knew the senate, and the character of the leading members, was deemed the most accomplished statesman of his time. At present, since a violent convulsion has overturned the old republic, and the government of Rome differs in nothing from a monarchy, the objects of political knowledge are changed, and, for that reason, such transactions as it is my business to relate, will not be without their use. Few are qualified, by their own reflection, to mark the boundaries between vice and virtue. To separate the useful from that which leads to destruction, is not the talent of every man. The example of others is the school of wisdom.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that the detail into which I am obliged to enter is in danger, while it gives lessons of prudence, of being dry and unentertaining. In other histories, the situation of countries, the events of war, and the exploits of illustrious generals, awaken curiosity, and enlarge the imagination. We have nothing before us, but acts of despotism, continual accusations, the treachery of friends, the ruin of innocence, and trial after trial ending always in the same tragic catastrophe. These, no doubt, will give to the present work a tedious uniformity, without an object to enliven attention, without an incident to prevent satiety. It may be further observed, that the ancient historian is safe from the severity of criticism: whether he favours the cause of Rome or of Carthage, the reader is indifferent to both parties; whereas the descendants of those who, in the reign of Tiberius, were either put to death, or branded with infamy, are living at this hour; and besides, if the whole race were extinct, will there not be at all times a succes-

sion of men, who, from congenial manners, and sympathy in vice, will think the fidelity of history a satire on themselves? Even the praise due to virtue is sure to give umbrage. The illustrious character is brought too near to the depravity of modern times. The contrast is too strong for tender eyes. But I return from this digression.

XXXIV. During the consulship of Cornelius Cossus and Asinius Agrippa, a new, and, till that time, unheard of crime was laid to the charge of Cremutius Cordus. He had published a series of annals. In that work, after the encomium of Brutus, he styled Cassius the last of Romans. For this sentiment a prosecution was commenced against the author by Satrius Secundus and Pinarius Natta, both known to be the creatures of Sejanus. That circumtsance was of itself sufficient; but the stern countenance with which Tiberius heard the defence, was a fatal prognostic. With a spirit, however, prepared for the worst, and even resolved on death, Cordus spoke to the following effect. "The charge, conscript fathers, is for words "only: so irreproachable is my conduct. And what "are my words? Do they affect the emperor or his "mother, the only persons included in the law of ma-"jesty? It is, however, my crime, that I have treated "the memory of Brutus and Cassius with respect: "and have not others done the same? In the num-"ber of writers who composed the lives of those emi-"nent men, is there one who has not done honour to "their memory? Titus Livius, that admirable histo-"rian, not more distinguished by his eloquence than "by his fidelity, was so lavish in praise of Pompey, "that Augustus called him the *Pompeian:* and yet "the friendship of that emperor was unalterable. "Scipio, and Afranius, with this same Brutus, and "this very Cassius, are mentioned by that immortal "author, not indeed as RUFFIANS and PARRICIDES (the "appellations now in vogue;) but as virtuous, upright, "and illustrious Romans. In the works of Asinius "Pollio their names are decorated with every praise. "Messala Corvinus boasted that Cassius was his "general. And yet those two distinguished writers

"flourished in the esteem of Augustus, and enjoyed "both wealth and honours. Cicero dedicated an en- "tire volume to the memory of Cato. What was the "conduct of Cæsar, the dictator? He contented him- "self with writing an answer, in effect, appealing to "the tribunal of the public. The letters of Marc An- "tony, as well as the speeches of Brutus, abound with "passages against Augustus, false indeed, but in a "style of bitter invective. The verses of Bibaculus "and Catullus, though keen lampoons on the family "of the Cæsars, are in every body's hands. Neither "Julius Cæsar nor Augustus showed any resentment "against these envenomed productions: on the con "trary, they left them to make their way in the world. "Was this their moderation, or superior wisdom? "Perhaps it was the latter. Neglected calumny soon "expires: show that you are hurt, and you give it the "appearance of truth.

XXXV. "From Greece I draw no precedents. In "that country not only liberty, but even licentiousness "was encouraged. He who felt the edge of satire, "knew how to retaliate. Words were revenged by "words. When public characters have passed away "from the stage of life, and the applause of friendship "as well as the malice of enemies, is heard no more, "it has ever been the prerogative of history to rejudge "their actions. Brutus and Cassius are not now at the "head of armies: they are not encamped on the "plains of Philippi: can I assist their cause? Have "I harangued the people, or incited them to take up "arms? It is now more than sixty years since these "two extraordinary men perished by the sword: from "that time they have been seen in their busts and sta- "tues: those remains the very conquerors spared, "and history has been just to their memory. Posterity "allows to every man his true value and his proper "honours. You may, if you will, by your judgment "affect my life: but Brutus and Cassius will be "still remembered, and my name may attend their "triumph." Having thus delivered his sentiments, he left the senate, and by abstinence put an end to his days.

The fathers ordered his book to be burnt by the ædiles; but to destroy it was not in their power. It was preserved in secret, and copies have been multiplied; so vain and senseless is the attempt, by an arbitrary act, to extinguish the light of truth, and defraud posterity of due information. Genius thrives under oppression: persecute the author, and you enhance the value of his work. Foreign tyrants, and all who have adopted their barbarous policy, have experienced this truth: by proscribing talents, they recorded their own disgrace, and gave the writer a passport to immortality.

XXXVI. The whole of this year was one continued series of prosecutions; insomuch that on one of the days of the Latin festival, when Drusus, in his character of præfect of Rome, ascended the tribunal, Calpurnius Salvianus took the opportunity to present an accusation against Sextus Marius. A proceeding so irregular drew down the censure of Tiberius. Salvianus was driven into banishment. A complaint against the inhabitants of the city of Cyzicus, was presented to the senate, charging, that they had suffered the ceremonies in honour of Augustus to fall into contempt, and had moreover offered violence to several Roman citizens. For this offence they were deprived of the privileges which had been granted to them for their fidelity in the war with Mithridates. That monarch laid siege to their city; but, by the fortitude of the people, not less than by the succour sent by Lucullus, he was obliged to abandon the place. Fonteius Capito, who had been proconsul of Asia, was acquitted of the charge alleged against him, by the malice of that daring accuser, Vibius Serenus. And yet the author of so vile a calumny passed with impunity. He had the curses of the people, and the protection of the emperor. Informers, in proportion as they rose in guilt, became sacred characters. If any were punished, it was only such as were mere novices in guilt, obscure and petty villains, who had no talents for mischief.

XXXVII. Ambassadors, about this time, arrived from the further Spain, praying leave, in imitation of the people of Asia, to build a temple to the emperor

and his mother. Tiberius had strength of mind to despise the offerings of adulation: he knew, however, that his conduct on a former occasion had been taxed with the littleness of vainglory. To clear himself from that aspersion, he made the following speech. "I am "not, conscript fathers, now to learn that, when a "similar petition came from Asia, I was accused of "weakness and irresolution, for not giving a decided "negative. The silence which I then observed, and "the law which I have laid down to myself for the "future, it is my intention now to explain. Augustus, "it is well known, permitted a temple to be raised at "Pergamus, in honour of himself and the city of "Rome. His example has ever been the rule of my "conduct. I yielded to the solicitations of Asia the "more willingly, as with the veneration offered to "myself, that of the senate was mixed and blended. "That single act of compliance may, perhaps, require "no apology: but to be deified throughout the pro-"vinces, and intrude my own image among the statues "of the gods, what were it but vain presumption, the "height of human arrogance? Erect more altars, and "the homage paid to Augustus will be no longer "an honour to his memory: by promiscuous use, it "will tarnish in the eyes of mankind, and vanish into "nothing.

XXXVIII. "As to myself, conscript fathers, I pre-"tend to nothing above the condition of humanity: a "mortal man, I have the duties of our common nature "to perform. Raised to a painful pre-eminence, if I "sustain the arduous character imposed upon me, the "measure of my happiness is full. These are my sen-"timents; I avow them in your presence, and I hope "they will reach posterity. Should future ages pro-"nounce me not unworthy of my ancestors; should "they think me vigilant for the public good, in dan-"ger firm, and, for the interest of all, ready to encoun-"ter personal animosities, that character will be the "bright reward of all my labours. Those are the "temples, which I wish to raise: they are the truest "temples, for they are fixed in the heart. It is there "I would be worshipped, in the esteem and the affec-

"tions of men, that best and most lasting monument. "Piles of stones and marble structures, when the idol "ceases to be adored, and the judgment of posterity "rises to execration, are mere charnel houses, that "moulder into ruin.

"I therefore now address myself to the allies of "the empire, to the citizens of Rome, and to the "immortal gods; to the gods it is my prayer, that to "the end of life they may grant the blessing of an "undisturbed, a clear, a collected mind, with a just "sense of laws both human and divine. Of man-"kind I request, that, when I am no more, they will "do justice to my memory; and, with kind acknow-"ledgments, record my name, and the actions of my "life." In these sentiments he persisted ever after. Even in private conversation he never ceased to de-claim against the abuses of religious honours. For this self-denial various motives were assigned. Some called it modesty; others, a sense of his own demerit: many imputed it to a degenerate spirit, insensible to all fair and honourable distinctions. The love of glory, they observed, has ever been the incentive of exalted minds. It was by this principle that Hercu-les and Bacchus enrolled themselves among the gods of Greece; and it was thus that Romulus was deified at Rome. Augustus made a right estimate of things, and, by consequence, aspired to rank himself with ancient worthies. With regard to other gratifications, princes are in a station, where to desire, is to have. But the passion for glory ought to be insatiable. The esteem of posterity is the true ambition of a prince. From the contempt of fame arises a contempt of virtue.

XXXIX. Sejanus, intoxicated with success, and hurried on by the importunity of the younger Livia, who was grown impatient for the promised marriage, thought fit to open the business to the emperor. All applications, at that time, even when a personal inter-view took place, were presented to the prince in writ-ing. The purport of the memorial was, that "the "munificence of Augustus to the petitioner, and the "favours added by Tiberius, had so engrossed all his

"faculties, that he was now accustomed, instead of "supplicating the gods, to offer up his prayers to the "prince. Of rank and splendour he had never been "ambitious: a post of difficulty, where he watched "day and night like a common sentinel, to guard the "life of his sovereign, was the only honour he had "ever sought. And yet a mark of the highest dis-"tinction had been conferred upon him. The empe-"ror deemed him worthy of an alliance with the im-"perial house. His present hopes were built on that "foundation. Having heard that Augustus, when the "marriage of his daughter was in contemplation, "doubted, for some time, whether he should not give "her to a Roman knight; he presumed to offer his "humble request, that Tiberius, if a new match was de-"signed for Livia, would graciously think of a friend, "who would bear in mind a due sense of the favour "conferred upon him, but never claim an exemption "from the toil and duty of his post. To shelter his "family from the animosity of Agrippina was the ob-"ject he had in view. He felt for his children; but as "to himself, if he died in the service of his prince, he "should die content and full of years."

XL. Tiberius expressed himself pleased with the style of affection which breathed through the memorial. He mentioned in a cursory manner, the favours he had granted, but desired time for the consideration of a subject so entirely new and unexpected. Having weighed the business, he returned the following answer: "In all matters of deliberation, self interest is "the principle by which individuals decide for them-"selves: with princes it is otherwise. The opinions "of the people claim their attention, and public fame "must direct their conduct. To the request which "had been made, an obvious answer presented itself "to his pen: he might observe, that it was for Livia "to determine, whether she would contract another "marriage, or be content to remain the widow of Dru-"sus. He might add, that she had a mother and a "grandmother, more nearly connected than himself, "and, for that reason, fitter to be consulted. But he "would deal openly, and in terms of plain simplicity.

"And first, as to Agrippina; her resentments would "break out with redoubled violence, if, by the mar- "riage of Livia, she saw the imperial family divided "into contending factions. Even at present, female "jealousies made a scene of tumult and distraction. "His grandsons were involved in their disputes. "Should the marriage be allowed, perpetual discord "might be the consequence.

"Do you imagine, Sejanus, that Livia, the widow "first of Caius Cæsar, and since of Drusus, will act "an humble part, and waste her life in the embraces "of a Roman knight? Should I consent, what will "be said by those who saw her father, her brother, "and the ancestors of our family, invested with the "highest honours of the state? But it seems you will "not aspire above your present station. Remember "that the magistrates, and the first men in Rome, "who besiege your levee, and in every thing defer "to your judgment; remember, I say, that they now "proclaim aloud, that you have already soared above "the equestrian rank, and enjoy higher authority than "was ever exercised by the favourites of my father. "They declaim against you with envy, and they ob- "liquely glance at me. But Augustus, you say, had "thoughts of giving his daughter to one of the eques- "trian order. And if, overwhelmed by a weight of "cares, yet sensible at the same time of the honour "that would accrue to the favoured bridegroom, he "mentioned occasionally Caius Proculeius, and some "others, is it not well known that they were all of mo- "derate principles; men who led a life of tranquillity, "and took no part in the transactions of the state? "And if Augustus had his doubts, is it for me to take "a decided part? His final determination is the true "precedent. He gave his daughter first to Agrippa, "and afterwards to myself. These are the reflections "which I thought proper to communicate to you. "My friendship is without disguise. To the mea- "sures which you and Livia may have concerted, no "obstacles shall arise from me. But still there are "other ties by which I would bind you to myself in "closer union. I will not at present enlarge on the

"subject. I shall only say, that I know no honour "to which you are not entitled by your virtues, and "your zeal for my interest. But what I think and "feel on this head I shall take occasion to explain "to the senate, or, it may be, in a full assembly of the "people."

XLI. Alarmed by this answer, Sejanus dropped all thoughts of the marriage. A crowd of apprehensions rushed upon him. He feared the penetrating eye of malicious enemies; he dreaded the whispers of suspicion, and the clamours of the public. To prevent impressions to his disadvantage, he presented a second memorial, humbly requesting that the emperor would pay no regard to the suggestions of ill designing men. Between two nice and difficult points the favourite was now much embarrassed. If, for the sake of a more humble appearance, he determined to avoid for the future the great conflux of visitors, who frequented his house, his power, in a short time, would be in its wane; and on the other hand, by receiving such a numerous train, he gave access to spies upon his conduct. A new expedient occurred to him. He resolved to persuade the emperor to withdraw from the city, and lead, in some delightful, but remote, situation, a life of ease and solitary pleasure. In this measure he saw many advantages. Access to the prince would depend on the minister; all letters conveyed by the soldiers would fall into his hands: and Tiberius, now in the vale of years, might be, when charmed with his retreat, and lulled to repose and indolence, more easily induced to resign the reins of government. In that retirement the favourite would disengage himself from the vain parade of crowded levees; envy would be appeased; and instead of the shadow of power, he might grasp the substance. To this end, Sejanus affected to disrelish the noise and bustle of the city; the people assembling in crowds gave him disgust; and the courtiers, who buzzed in the palace, brought nothing but fatigue and vain parade. He talked of the pleasure of rural solitude, where there was nothing but pure enjoyment, no little anxieties, no tedious langour, no intrigues of faction; a scene of

tranquillity, where important plans of policy might be concerted at leisure.

XLII. It happened in this juncture that the trial of Votienus Montanus, a man famous for his wit and talents, was brought to a hearing. In the course of his business, Tiberius, with a mind already balancing, came to a resolution to avoid, for the future, the assembly of the fathers, where he was so often mortified by grating expressions. Montanus was accused of words injurious to the emperor; Æmilius, a man in the military line, was a witness against him. To establish the charge, this man went into a minute detail, from little circumstances hoping to deduce a full conviction. Though ill heard by the fathers, he persisted, in spite of noise and frequent interruption, to relate every circumstance. Tiberius heard the sarcastic language with which his character was torn and mangled in private. He rose in a sudden transport of passion, declaring, in a peremptory tone, that he would refute the calumny in that stage of the business, or institute a judicial proceeding for the purpose. The entreaties of his friends, seconded by the adulation of the fathers, were scarce sufficient to appease his anger. The judgment usual in cases of violated majesty was pronounced against Montanus. Want of clemency was the general objection to Tiberius; but the reproach, instead of mitigating, served only to inflame that vindictive temper. With a spirit exasperated, he took up the affair of Aquila, convicted of adultery with Varius Ligur; and though Lentulus Gætulicus, consul elect, was of opinion that the penalties of the Julian law would be an adequate punishment, she was ordered into exile. Apidius Merula had refused to swear on the acts of Augustus. For that offence Tiberius razed his name from the register of the senators.

XLIII. The dispute then depending between the Lacedæmonians and the people of Messena, concerning the temple of the Limnatidian Diana, was brought to a hearing before the senate. Deputies were heard from both places. On the part of the Lacedæmonians it was contended, that the structure in question was

built by their ancestors, within the territory of Sparta. For proof of the fact, they cited extracts from history, and passages of ancient poetry. In the war with Philip of Macedon, they were deprived of their right by force of arms; but the same was restored by Julius Cæsar and Marc Antony. The Messenians, on the other hand, produced an ancient chart of Peloponnesus, divided among the descendants of Hercules; by which it appeared, that the Dentheliate field, where the temple stood, fell to the lot of the king of Messena. Inscriptions, verifying the fact, were still to be seen in stone and tables of brass. If fragments of poetry and loose scraps of history were to be admitted, they had, in that kind, a fund of evidence more ample, and directly in point. It was not by an act of violence that Philip of Macedon transferred the possession from Sparta to the Messenians; his justice dictated that decision. Since that time, several judgments, all conspiring to the same effect, were pronounced by king Antigonus, by Mummius, the Roman general, by the Milesians, in their capacity of public arbitrators, and finally by Atidius Geminus, then prætor of Achaia. The Messenians carried their point.

The citizens of Segestum presented a petition, stating, that the temple of Venus, on mount Erix, had mouldered away, and therefore praying leave to build a new edifice on the same spot. Their account of the first foundation was so highly flattering to the pride of Tiberius, that, considering himself as a person related to the goddess, he undertook the care and expense of the building.

A petition from the city of Marseilles came next into debate. The fact was shortly this: Vulcatius Moschus, banished by the laws of Rome, and admitted to the freedom of the city of Marseilles, bequeathed to that republic, which he considered as his native country, the whole of his property. To justify this proceeding, the Marseillians cited the case of Publius Rutilius, an exile from Rome, and afterwards naturalized by the people of Smyrna. The authority of the precedent was admitted, and the fathers pronounced in favour of the will.

XLIV. In the course of the year died Cneis Lentulus and Lucius Domitius, two citizens of distinguished eminence. The consular dignity, and the honour of triumphal ornaments, for a complete victory over the Getulians, gave lustre to the name of Lentulus: but the true glory of his character arose from the dignity with which he supported himself, first in modest poverty, and afterwards in the possession of a splendid fortune, acquired with integrity, and enjoyed with moderation. Domitius owed much of his consequence to his ancestors. His father, during the civil wars, remained master of the seas till he went over to Marc Antony, and, soon after deserting his party, followed the fortunes of Augustus. His grandfather fell in the battle of Pharsalia, fighting for the senate. Domitius, thus descended, was deemed worthy of the younger Antonia, the daughter of Marc Antony, by his wife Octavia. He led the Roman legions beyond the Elbe, and penetrated further into Germany than any former commander. His services were rewarded with triumphal ornaments.

Lucius Antonius, who likewise died this year, must not be omitted. He was descended from a line of ancestors, highly honoured, but unfortunate. His father, Julius Antonius, being put to death for his adulterous commerce with Julia, the son, at that time of tender years, and grand-nephew to Augustus, was sent out of the way to the city of Marseilles, where, under the pretence of pursuing his studies, he was detained in actual banishment. Funeral honours were paid to his memory, and his remains, by a decree of the senate, were deposited in the monument of the Octavian family.

XLV. While the same consuls continued in office, a deed of an atrocious nature was committed in the nethermost Spain by a peasant from the district of Termes. Lucius Piso, the prætor of the province, in a period of profound peace, was travelling through the country, unguarded, and without precaution, when a desperate ruffian attacked him on the road, and at one blow laid him dead on the spot. Trusting to the swiftness of his horse, the assassin made to-

wards the forest, and, there dismounting, pursued his way on foot over devious wilds and craggy steeps, eluding the vigilance and activity of the Romans. He did not, however, remain long concealed. His horse was found in the woods, and being led through the neighbouring villages, the name of the owner was soon discovered. The villain, of course, was appehended. On the rack, and under the most excruciating torture, he refused to discover his accomplices. With a tone of firmness, and in his own language, "Your ques-"tions," he said, "are all in vain. Let my associates "come; let them behold my sufferings and my con-"stancy; not all the pangs you can inflict, shall wrest "the secret from me." On the following day, as they were again dragging him to the rack, he broke, with a sudden exertion, from the hands of the executioner, and dashing with violence against a stone, fell and expired. The murder of Piso was not thought to be the single crime of this bold assassin: the inhabitants of Termes, it was generally believed, entered into a conspiracy to cut off a man who claimed restitution of the public money which had been rescued from the collectors. Piso urged his demand with more rigour than suited the stubborn genius of a savage people.

XLVI. Lentulus Gætulicus and Caius Calvisius succeeded to the consulship. During their administration, triumphal ornaments were decreed to Poppæus Sabinus, for his victory over the people of Thrace; a clan of freebooters, who led a savage life on hills and rugged cliffs, without laws, or any notion of civil policy. Rushing down from their mountains, they waged a desultory war with wild ferocity. Their motives to a revolt were strong and powerful. They saw the flower of their youth carried off to recruit the Roman armies, and of course their numbers much reduced. Men who measured their obedience, even to their own kings, by the mere caprice of barbarians, were not willing to submit to the Roman yoke. On former occasions, when they were willing to act as auxiliaries, they gave the command of their forces to chiefs of their own nation, under an express condition, that they should serve against the neighbouring states only,

and not be obliged to fight the battles of Rome in distant regions. In the present juncture an idea prevailed amongst them, that they were to be exterminated from their native soil, and mixed with other troops in foreign nations.

Before they had recourse to arms, they sent a deputation to Sabinus, stating "their former friendship, "and the passive disposition with which they had "heretofore submitted to the Roman generals. They "were willing to continue in the same sentiments, "provided no new grievance gave them cause of com- "plaint. But if the intention was to treat them as a "vanquished people; if the yoke of slavery was pre- "pared for their necks, they abounded with men and "steel, and they had hearts devoted to liberty or "death." Their ambassadors, after thus declaring themselves, pointed to their castles on the ridge of hills and rocks, where they had collected their families, their parents, and their wives. If the sword must be drawn, they threatened a campaign big with danger, in its nature difficult, fierce, and bloody.

XLVII. Sabinus, wishing to gain sufficient time for the assembling of his army, amused them with gentle answers. Meanwhile, Pomponius Labeo, with a legion from Mæsia, and Rhæmetalces, who reigned over part of Thrace, came up with a body of his subjects, who still retained their fidelity, and formed a junction against the rebels. Sabinus, thus reinforced, went in quest of the enemy. The barbarians had taken post in the woods and narrow defiles. The bold and warlike showed themselves in force on the declivity of the hills. The Roman general advanced in regular order of battle. The mountaineers were put to flight, but with inconsiderable loss. The nature of the place favoured their retreat. Sabinus encamped on the spot deserted by the enemy, and, having raised entrenchments, marched with a strong detachment to an adjacent hill, narrow at the top, but, by a level and continued ridge, extending to a strong hold, where the barbarians had collected a prodigious multitude, some provided with arms, but the greater part no better than an undisciplined rabble.

The bravest of the malcontents appeared on the outside of their lines, according to the custom of barbarians, dancing in wild distortion, and howling savage songs. The Roman archers advanced to attack them. They poured in a volley of darts, and wounded numbers with impunity, till, having approached too near, the besieged made a sally from the castle, and threw the Romans into disorder. An auxiliary cohort, which had been posted to advantage, came up to support the broken ranks. This body of reserve consisted of the Sicambrians, a wild, ferocious people, who, like the Thracians, rushed to battle with the mingled uproar of a savage warhoop, and the hideous clangour of their arms.

XLVIII. Sabinus pitched a new camp near the fortifications of the castle. In the former entrenchments he left the Thracians, who had joined the army under the command of Rhœmetalces, with orders to ravage the country, and, as long as day-light lasted to plunder, burn and destroy; but, during the night, to remain within their lines, taking care to station outposts and sentinels, to prevent a surprise. These directions were at first duly observed; but a relaxation of discipline soon took place. Enriched with booty, the men gave themselves up to riot and dissipation; no sentinels fixed, and no guard appointed, the time was spent in carousals, and their whole camp lay buried in sleep and wine. The mountaineers, having good intelligence from their scouts, formed two separate divisions; one to fall on the roving freebooters, and the other, in the same moment, to storm the Romans in their entrenchments; not, indeed, with hopes of carrying the works, but chiefly to spread a double alarm, and cause a scene of wild confusion, in which the men, amidst a volley of darts, would be intent on their own immediate danger, and none would listen to the uproar of another battle. To augment the terror, both assaults began in the night. No impression was made on the legions: but the Thracian auxiliaries, stretched at ease in their entrenchments, or idly wandering about on the outside of the lines, were taken by surprise, and put to the sword without

mercy. The slaughter raged with greater fury, as the mountaineers thought they were executing an act of vengeance on perfidious men, who deserted the common cause, and fought to enslave themselves and their country.

XLIX. On the following day Sabinus drew up his men on the open plain, expecting that the events of the preceding night would encourage the barbarians to hazard a battle. Seeing that nothing could draw them from their works, or their fastnesses on the hills, he began a regular siege. A number of forts were thrown up with all expedition, and a fosse, with lines of circumvallation, inclosed a space of four miles round. To cut off all supplies of water and provisions, he advanced by degrees, and raising new works, formed a close blockade on every side. From a high rampart the Romans were able to discharge a volley of stones, and darts, and firebrands. Thirst was the chief distress of the mountaineers. A single fountain was their only resource. The men who bore arms, and an infinite multitude incapable of service, were involved in one general calamity. The distress was still increased by the famine that raged among the horses and cattle, which, without any kind of distinction, according to the custom of barbarians, lay intermixed with the men. In one promiscuous heap were to be seen the carcases of animals, and the bodies of soldiers who perished by the sword, or the anguish of thirst. Clotted gore, and stench, and contagion, filled the place. To complete their misery, internal discord, that worst of evils, added to the horror of the scene. Some were for laying down their arms; others preferring self destruction, proposed a general massacre; while a third party thought it better to sally out, and die sword in hand fighting in the cause of liberty; a brave and generous counsel, different, indeed, from the advice of their comrades, but worthy of heroic minds.

L. The expedient of surrendering at discretion was adopted by one of the leading chiefs. His name was Dinis; a man advanced in years, and by long experience convinced as well of the clemency as the terror of the Roman name. To submit, he said, was their

only remedy; and, accordingly, he threw himself, his wife, and children, on the mercy of the conqueror. He was followed by the weaker sex, and all who preferred slavery to a glorious death. Two other chiefs, by name Tarsa and Turesis, advised bolder measures. Between their opposite sentiments, the young and vigorous were divided. To fall with falling liberty was the resolution of both; but they chose different modes. Tarsa declared for immediate death, the end of all hopes and fears; and, to lead the way, he plunged the poniard in his breast. Numbers followed his example. Turesis was still resolved to sally out; and for that purpose, he waited for the advantage of the night. The Roman general received intelligence, and accordingly, strengthened the guards at every post. Night came on, and brought with it utter darkness and tempestuous weather. With shouts and horrible howlings, followed at intervals by a profound and awful silence, the barbarians kept the besiegers in a constant alarm. Sabinus rounded the watch, and at every post exhorted his men to be neither terrified by savage howlings, nor lulled into security by deceitful stillness. If taken by surprise, they would give to an insidious enemy every advantage. "Let each "man continue fixed at his post, and let no darts be "thrown at random, and, by consequence, without ef-"fect."

LI. The barbarians, in different divisions, came rushing down from their hills. With massy stones, with clubs hardened by fire, and with trunks of trees, they attempted to batter a breach in the Roman palisade; they threw hurdles, faggots, and dead bodies into the trenches; they laid bridges over the fosse, and applied scaling ladders to the rampart; they grasped hold of the works; they endeavoured to force their way, and fought hand to hand. The garrison drove them back with their javelins, beat them down with their bucklers, and overwhelmed them with huge heaps of stones. Both sides fought with obstinate bravery; the Romans to complete a victory almost gained already, and to avoid the disgrace of suffering it to be wrested from them. On the part of

the barbarians, despair was courage; the last struggle for life inspired them, and the shrieks of their wives and mothers roused them to deeds of valour.

The darkness of the night favoured equally the coward and the brave. Blows were given at random, and where they fell was uncertain; wounds were received, no man could tell from whom. Friends and enemies were mixed without distinction. The shouts of the barbarians, reverberating from the neighbouring hills, sounded in the ear of the Romans, as if the uproar was at their backs. They thought the enemy had stormed the entrenchments, and they fled from their posts. The barbarians, however, were not able to force the works. The number that entered was inconsiderable. At the dawn of day they beheld a melancholy spectacle; the bravest of their comrades either disabled by their wounds, or lying dead on the spot. Disheartened at the sight, they fled to their fortifications, and were at last compelled to surrender at discretion. The people in the neighbourhood made a voluntary submission. The few that still held out, were protected by the severity of the winter, which setting in as is usual near Mount Hæmus, with intense rigour, the Roman general could neither attack them in their fastnesses, nor reduce them by a siege.

LII. At Rome, in the mean time, the imperial family was thrown into a state of distraction. As a prelude to the fate of Agrippina, a prosecution was commenced against Claudia Pulchra, her near relation. Domitius Afer was the prosecutor; a man who had lately discharged the office of prætor, but had not risen to any degree of eminence or consideration in the state. Aspiring, bold, and turbulent, he was now determined to advance himself, by any means, however flagitious. The heads of his accusation were adultery with Furnius; a design to poison the emperor, and the secret practice of spells, and magic incantations. The haughty spirit of Agrippina but ill could brook the danger of her friend. She rushed to the presence of Tiberius. Finding him in the act of offering a sacrifice to the manes of Augus-

tus, she accosted him in a tone of vehemence. "The "piety," she said, "which thus employs itself in slay- "ing victims to the deceased emperor, agrees but ill "with the hatred that persecutes his posterity. Those "are senseless statues which you adore; they are not "animated with the spirit of Augustus. His descend- "ants are living images of him: and yet even they, "whose veins are warm with his celestial blood, stand "trembling on the brink of peril. Why is Claudia "Pulchra devoted to destruction? What has she com- "mitted? She has loved Agrippina, to excess has "loved her; that is her only crime. Improvident "woman! she might have remembered Sosia, undone "and ruined for no other reason." Tiberius felt the reproach: it drew from that inscrutable breast a sud- den burst of resentment. He told Agrippina, in a Greek verse, "You are hurt, because you do not "reign." Pulchra and Furnius were both condemned. In the conduct of the prosecution, Domitius Afer shone forth with such a flame of eloquence, that he ranked at once with the most celebrated orators, and, by the suffrage of Tiberius, was pronounced an orginal ge- nius, depending on his own native energy. From that time, he pursued the career of eloquence, sometimes engaged on the side of the accused, often against them, and always doing more honour to his talents, than to his moral character. As age advanced upon him, the love of hearing himself talk continued, when the ability was gone. He remained, with decayed faculties, a superannuated orator.

LIII. Agrippina, weakened by a fit of illness, but still retaining the pride of her character, received a visit from Tiberius. She remained for some time fixed in silence; tears only forced their way. At length, in terms of supplication, mixed with bitter re- proaches, she desired him to consider, "that widow "hood is a state of destitution. A second marriage "might assuage her sorrows. The season of her "youth was not entirely passed, and for a woman of "honour there was no resource but in the conjugal "state. There were at Rome citizens of illustrious "rank, who would, with pride, take the widow and

"the children of Germanicus to their protection." Tiberius saw in this request a spirit of ambition, that looked proudly towards the imperial dignity. Unwilling, notwithstanding, to discover his jealousy, he heard her with calm indifference, and left her without an answer. For this anecdote, not to be found in the historians of the time, I am indebted to the younger Agrippina, the mother of the emperor Nero, who, in the memoirs of her life, has related her own misfortunes and those of her family.

LIV. The violence of Agrippina's passions, and the imprudence of her conduct, exposed her to the malice of Sejanus, who now had laid the seed-plots of her destruction. He sent his agents to inform her, under a mask of friendship, that she would do well to beware of poison, and avoid eating at the emperor's table. To dissemble was not the talent of Agrippina. Invited by Tiberius, and placed near his person, she remained silent, pensive, with downcast eyes, abstaining from every thing placed before her. Tiberius marked her behaviour, or perhaps the hint was previously given. To put her to the test, he praised the apples that stood near him, and helped her with his own hand. Agrippina was alarmed. Without so much as tasting the fruit, she gave it to the servants to be conveyed away. Tiberius, always master of himself, with seeming inadvertence overlooked her behaviour, but took an opportunity to say privately to his mother, "Should this woman be treated with severity, will any body wonder, when she now imputes to me the guilt of dealing in poison?" A report prevailed soon after, that the fate of Agrippina was determined; but the emperor would not venture to act with open violence; he knew that the public eye was upon him, and resolved, for that reason, to lie in wait for a clandestine murder.

LV. To check the murmurs of suspicion, and draw the public attention to other objects, Tiberius once more attended the debates of the fathers, and gave audience for several days to the ambassadors from different parts of Asia, all with ardour claiming a right to build, in their respective territories, the tem-

ple already mentioned. Eleven cities rivalled each other, not in power and opulence, but with equal zeal contending for the preference. They stated, with little variation, the antiquity of their origin, and their fidelity to Rome, in the various wars with Persius, Aristonicus, and other eastern princes. The people of Hypæpes, the Trallians, Laodiceans, and Magnesians, were deemed unequal to the expense, and, for that reason, thrown out of the case. The inhabitants of Ilium boasted that Troy was the cradle of the Roman people, and on that foundation rested their pretensions. The citizens of Halicarnassus held the senate for some time in suspense. It was alleged on their behalf, that, during a series of twelve hundred years, they had not felt the shock of an earthquake, and they promised to build an edifice on a solid rock. The city of Pergamus made a merit of having already built a temple in honour of Augustus; but that distinction was deemed sufficient. At Ephesus, where Diana was adored, and at Miletus, where Apollo was worshipped, a new object of veneration was deemed unnecessary.

The question was now reduced to the cities of Sardes and Smyrna. The former read a decree, in which they were acknowledged by the Etrurians as a kindred nation. By this document it appeared, that Tyrrhenus and Lydus, both sons of king Atys, finding their country overstocked with inhabitants, agreed to form a separation. Lydus continued to occupy his native territory, and Tyrrhenus withdrew to settle a new colony. From that time the two nations were called by the names of their respective chiefs; in Asia, Lydians; Tyrrhenians in Italy. The Lydians multiplied their numbers with such increase, that they overflowed a second time. A migration passed over into Greece, and from Pelops, their leader, gave to the new territory the name of Peloponnesus. Besides these vouchers, the people of Sardis produced letters from some of the Roman generals, and also treaties of alliance during the wars of Macedonia. Nor did they forget to state the number of rivers that fertilized their soil, the temperature of

their climate, and the plenty that covered the face of the country.

LVI. The deputies from Smyrna thought fit to grace their cause with the antiquity of their origin: but whether their city was founded by Tantalus, the son of Jupiter; by Theseus, the son of a god; or by one of the ancient Amazons, they left as a question of curiosity; relying more on their constant attachment to the Romans, whom they had assisted with a naval force, not only in their wars with foreign nations, but in those that involved all Italy. They thought it of moment to observe, that, of all the cities of Asia, they were the first that built a temple in honour of the Roman name. This they had done in the consulship of Marcus Porcius Cato, at a time when the republic was undoubtedly in a flourishing condition, but had not yet attained that meridian splendour, which afterwards followed the success of her arms. Carthage still subsisted, and the kings of Asia were unsubdued. For proof of still greater merit, the deputies appealed to the testimony of Lucius Sylla When the legions under that commander, well nigh reduced to famine by the severity of the winter, and distressed for want of clothing, were in danger of being destroyed, their condition was no sooner known at Smyrna, than the people then assembled in a public convention, with one generous impulse, threw off their clothes, and sent them to supply the necessities of the Roman army. The question was thereupon put by the senate and the city of Smyrna prevailed. Vibius Marsus moved, that, in aid to Marcus Lepidus, who had obtained the province by lot, an officer extraordinary should be put in commission, to superintend the building of the temple. The delicacy of Lepidus not permitting him to choose his coadjutor, the names of such as were of prætorian rank were drawn by lot, and the chance fell on Valerius Naso.

LVII. In this juncture, Tiberius, bent on the measure which he had often ruminated, and as often procrastinated, set out for Campania, under the plausible pretence of dedicating a temple to Jupiter at Capua, and another to Augustus at Nola, but, in truth, deter-

mined never to return to Rome. Relying on the authority of eminent historians, I have ascribed the secret cause of this retreat to the artifice of Sejanus; but when it is considered, that, after the downfal of that minister, Tiberius passed the six following years in the same recluse manner, I am inclined to refer the whole to the workings of a dark and politic spirit, that wished to hide in solitude the lust and cruelty, which in his actions were too manifest to the world. At Rome there was a current opinion, that, towards the end of life, he was unwilling to exhibit to public view a tall, emaciated figure, a body sinking under the weight of years, a bald head, a scrofulous face, and a number of blotches, covered with medical applications. It is well known, that during his retreat at the Isle of Rhodes, he shunned society, and passed his time in secret gratifications. According to some writers, it was the domineering spirit of his mother that drove him from Rome. To admit her to a share in the government was not in his nature: and to exclude her altogether was not in his power, since it was to her that he owed his elevation. Augustus, it is certain, at one point of time, favoured Germanicus, the grandson of his sister, and even thought of raising him to the supreme authority; but, being governed by his wife, he gave her son the preference, and left Germanicus to be adopted by Tiberius. With these services Livia taxed her son; and what she had given, she considered as a deposit liable to be resumed.

LVIII. Tiberius departed from Rome with a slender retinue. In his train were Cocceius Nerva, a senator of consular rank, celebrated for his legal knowledge; Sejanus, the favourite minister; and Curtius Atticus, a Roman knight. These were the only persons of rank. The rest were distinguished by nothing but their literature; mostly Greeks, men whose talents amused him in his hours of leisure. The professors of judicial astrology declared their opinion, that the position of the planets, under which Tiberius left the capital, made his return impossible. This prediction gained credit, and the death of the emperor being, by consequence, thought near at hand, numbers, who had

been bold enough to circulate the rumour, brought on their own destruction. That the prince should remain, during the space of eleven years, a voluntary exile from the seat of government, was an event beyond the reach of human foresight. In the end, however, the art of such as pretend to see into futurity, was discovered to be vain and frivolous. It was seen how nearly truth and falsehood are allied, and how much the facts, which happen to be foretold, are involved in darkness. That Tiberius would return no more, was a prophecy verified by the event; the rest was altogether visionary, since we find, that, long after that time, he appeared in the neighbourhood of Rome, sometimes on the adjacent shore, often in the suburbs, and died at last in the extremity of old age.

LIX. While the reports of the astrologers were scattered abroad, an accident, which put Tiberius in danger of his life, added to the credulity of the people, but, at the same time, raised Sejanus higher than ever in the affections and esteem of his master. It happened, that in a cave formed by nature, at a villa called Spelunca, between the Gulf of Amyclé and the hills of Fondi, Tiberius was at a banquet with a party of his friends, when the stones at the entrance gave way on a sudden, and crushed some of the attendants. The guests were alarmed, and fled for safety. Sejanus, to protect his master, fell on his knee, and with his whole force, sustained the impending weight. In that attitude he was found by the soldiers, who came to relieve the prince. From that time the power of the minister knew no bounds. A man, who, in the moment of danger, could show so much zeal for his master, and so little attention to himself, was heard with affection and unlimited confidence. His counsels, however pernicious, were received as the dictates of truth and honour.

Towards the children of Germanicus, Sejanus affected to act with the integrity of a judge, while in secret he was their inveterate enemy. He suborned a band of accusers; and Nero, then presumptive heir to the empire, was the first devoted victim. The young prince, unhackneyed in the ways of men, modest in

his deportment, and in his manners amiable, had not the prudence that knows how to temporize and bend to occasions. The freedmen, and others about his person, eager to grasp at power, encouraged him to act with firmness, and a spirit suited to his rank. Such behaviour, they told him, would gratify the wishes of the people; the army desired it, and the pride of Sejanus would soon be crest-fallen, though at present he triumphed over the worn-out faculties of a superannuated emperor, and the careless disposition of a young and inexperienced prince.

LX. Roused by these discourses, Nero began to throw off all reserve. Guilt was foreign to his heart; but expressions of resentment fell from him, inconsiderate, rash, and unguarded. His words were caught up by spies about his person, and reported with aggravation. Against the malice of insidious men the prince had no opportunity to defend himself. He lived in constant anxiety, and every day brought some new alarm. Some of the domestics avoided his presence; others paid a formal salute, and coldly passed away; the greatest part entered into talk, and abruptly broke off the conversation; while the creatures of Sejanus, affecting to be free and easy, added mockery to their arrogance.

The emperor received the prince with a stern countenance, or an ambiguous smile. Whether Nero spoke, or suppressed his thoughts, every word was misconstrued, and even silence was a crime. The night itself gave him no respite from his cares, no retreat from danger. His waking moments, his repose, his sighs, his very dreams, informed against him: his wife carried the tale to her mother Livia, and the last whispered every thing to Sejanus. By that dark politician even Drusus, the brother of Nero, was drawn into the conspiracy. To dazzle the imagination of a stripling, the splendour of empire, and the sure succession, when the ruin of the elder brother was completed, were held forth as bright temptations. The spirit of contention, common between brothers, was with Drusus an additional motive: and the partiality of Agrippina for her eldest son inflamed a young man, who was by nature

violent and ambitious. Sejanus, in the mean time, while he seemed to cherish Drusus, was busily employed in schemes to undermine him. He knew the haughty temper of the prince, and from the violence of his passions expected to derive every advantage.

LXI. Towards the end of the year died two illustrious citizens, Asinius Agrippa, and Quintus Haterius. The former was of an honourable but not ancient family. His own character reflected lustre on his ancestors. Haterius was descended from a race of senators. His eloquence, while he lived, was in the highest celebrity; but his writings, published since his death, are not regarded as monuments of genius. Warm and rapid, he succeeded more through happiness than care. Diligence and depth of thinking, which give the last finishing to other works, and stamp their value with posterity, were not the talent of Haterius. His flowing period, and that harmonious cadence which charmed in the living orator, are now no longer heard. His page remains a dead letter, without grace or energy.

LXII. In the next consulship, which was that of Marcus Licinius and Lucius Calpurnius, an unforeseen disaster, no sooner begun than ended, laid a scene of ruin equal to the havoc of the most destructive war. A man of the name of Atilius, the son of a freedman, undertook at Fidena to build an amphitheatre for the exhibition of gladiators. The foundation was slight, and the superstructure not sufficiently braced; the work of a man, who had neither the pride of wealth, nor the ambition to make himself of consequence in a municipal town. The profit that might probably arise from such a scheme, was all he had in view. The people, under the austerity of a rigid and unsocial government deprived of their usual diversions, were eager for the novelty of a public spectacle; and the place being at no great distance from Rome, a vast conflux of men and women, old and young, crowded together. The consequence was, that the building, overloaded with spectators, gave way at once. All who were under the roof, besides a prodigious multitude that stood round the place, were

crushed under the ruins. The condition of those who perished instantly, was the happiest. They escaped the pangs of death, while the maimed and lacerated lingered in torment, beholding, as long as day-light lasted, their wives and children in equal agony, and, during the night, pierced to the heart by their shrieks and groans. A calamity so fatal was soon known round the country. Crowds from all quarters went to view the melancholy scene. One lamented a brother, another his near relation; children wept for their parents, and almost all for their friends. Such as by their avocations had been led a different way, were given up for lost. The real sufferers were still unknown, and, in that dreadful state of suspense, every bosom panted with doubt and fear.

LXIII. The ruins were no sooner removed, than the crowd rushed in to examine the place. They gathered around the dead bodies: they clasped them in their arms; they imprinted kisses, and often mistook the person. Disfigured faces, parity of age, and similitude of form and feature, occasioned great confusion. Claims were made, a tender contest followed, and errors were acknowledged. The number of killed or maimed was not less than fifty thousand. The senate provided by a decree, that, for the future no man, whose fortune was under four thousand sesterces, should presume to exhibit a spectacle of gladiators, and that till the foundation was examined, no amphitheatre should be erected. Atilius, the builder, was condemned to banishment. The grandees of Rome displayed their humanity on this occasion: they threw open their doors; they ordered medicines to be distributed, and the physicians attended with assiduity in every quarter. The city of Rome recalled, in that juncture, an image of ancient manners, when, after a battle bravely fought, the sick and wounded were received with open arms, and relieved by the generosity of their country.

LXIV. While the public mind was still bleeding for the late calamity, a dreadful fire laid waste a great part of the city. Mount Cœlius was reduced to ashes. The populace began to murmur The year,

they said, was big with disasters. and the prince departed from Rome under an evil constellation. Such is the logic of the multitude: what happens by chance they impute to design. To appease their discontent, Tiberius ordered a distribution of money in proportion to the damage of individuals. For this act of liberality, the senate passed a vote of thanks, and the people were loud in praise of munificence, so seasonably applied, and granted indiscriminately. No man had occasion to make interest; it was enough that he was a sufferer. The fathers came to a resolution, that mount Cælius, where a statue of Tiberius, in the house of Junius the senator, escaped the fury of the flames, should for the future be called mount Augustus. A prodigy of a similar nature happened in ancient times. The statue of Claudia Quinctia was saved twice from a general conflagration, and, on that account, placed, and dedicated in the temple of the Mother of the Gods. The Claudian family was ever after considered as peculiarly favoured by heaven, and the spot where the gods were lately so propitious to Tiberius, was declared to be consecrated ground.

LXV. It will not perhaps be improper to mention in this place, that the mount, of which we have been speaking, was, in the early ages of Rome, covered with a grove of oaks, and for that reason, called Querquetulanus. It took afterwards the name of Cælius from Cæles Vibenna, an Eutrurian chief, who marched at the head of his countrymen, to assist the Romans, and for that service had the spot assigned to him as a canton for himself and his people. Whether this was the act of Tarquinius Priscus, or some other Roman king, is not settled by the historians. Thus much is certain; the number transplanted was so great, that their new habitation extended from the mount along the plain beneath, as far as the spot where the forum stands at present. From those settlers the Tuscan Street derives its name.

LXVI. Though the sufferings of the people, in their late distress, were alleviated by the bounty of the prince, and the humanity of the great, there was still an evil, against which no remedy could be found,

The crew of informers rose in credit every day, and covered the city with consternation. Quintilius Varus, the son of Claudia Pulchra, and nearly related to the emperor, was marked out as a victim. His large possessions tempted Domitus Afer, who had already ruined the mother. The blow now aimed at the son, was no more than was expected from a man who had lived in indigence, and, having squandered the wages of his late iniquity, was ready to find a new quarry for his avarice. But that a man like Publius Dolabella, nobly descended, and related to Varus, should become an instrument in the destruction of his own family, was matter of wonder. The senate stopped the progress of the mischief. They resolved that the cause should stand over till the emperor's return to Rome. Procrastination was the only refuge of the unhappy.

LXVII. Tiberius, in the mean time, dedicated the two temples in Campania, which served him as a pretext for quitting the city of Rome. That business finished, he issued an edict, warning the neighbouring cities not to intrude upon his privacy. For better security, he placed a guard at proper stations, to prevent all access to his person. These precautions, however, did not content him. Hating the municipal towns, weary of the colonies, and sick of every thing on the continent, he passed over to Capreæ, a small island, separated from the promontory of Surrentum by an arm of the sea, not more than three miles broad. Defended there from all intrusion, and delighted with the solitude of the place, he sequestered himself from the world, seeing, as may be imagined, many circumstances suited to his humour. Not a single port in the channel; the stations but few, and those accessible only to small vessels; no part of the island, where men could land unobserved by the sentinels; the climate inviting; in the winter a soft and genial air, under the shelter of a mountain that repels the inclemency of the winds; in the summer, the heat allayed by the western breeze; the sea presenting a smooth expanse, and opening a view of the bay of Naples, with a beautiful landscape on its bor-

ders: all these conspired to please the taste and genius of Tiberius. The scene, indeed, has lost much of its beauty, the fiery eruptions of Mount Vesuvius having, since that time, changed the face of the country.

If we may believe an old tradition, a colony from Greece was formerly settled on the opposite coast of Italy, and the Teleboi were in possession of the isle of Capreæ. Be that as it may, Tiberius chose for his residence twelve different villas, all magnificent and well fortified. Tired of public business, he now resigned himself to his favourite gratifications, amidst his solitary vices still engendering mischief. The habit of nourishing dark suspicions, and believing every whisperer, still adhered to him. At Rome, Sejanus knew how to practise on such a temper; but in this retreat he governed him with unbounded influence. Having gained the ascendant, he thought it time to fall on Agrippina and her son Nero, not, as heretofore, with covered malice, but with open and avowed hostility. He gave them a guard, under colour of attending their persons, but in fact to be spies on their actions. Every circumstance was noted; their public and their private discourse, their messengers, their visitors, all were closely watched, and a journal kept of petty occurrences. The agents of Sejanus, by order of their master, advised them both to fly for protection to the German army, or to take sanctuary under the statue of Augustus in the public forum, and there implore the protection of the senate and the people. The advice was rejected; but the project, as if their own, and ripe for execution, was imputed to them as a crime.

LXVIII. Junius Silanus and Silius Nerva were the next consuls. The year began with a transaction of the blackest dye. Titus Sabinus, a Roman knight of high distinction, was seized with violence, and dragged to prison. His steady attachment to the house of Germanicus was his only crime. After the death of that unfortunate prince, he continued firm to Agrippina and her children: at her house a constant visitor; in public a sure attendant, and, of the whole

number that formerly paid their court, the only friend at last. His constancy was applauded by every honest mind, and censured by the vile and profligate. Four men of prætorian rank entered into a conspiracy to work his ruin. Their names were Latinius Latiaris, Porcius Cato, Petilius Rufus, and Marcus Opsius. They had all attained the prætorian rank, and now aspired to the consulship. The road to that dignity they knew was open to none but the creatures of Sejanus, and to the favour of that minister guilt was the only recommendation. The conspirators settling among themselves, that Latiaris, who had some connexion with Sabinus, should undertake to lay the snare, while the rest lay in wait for evidence, determined, as soon as their materials were collected, to begin their scene of iniquity, and stand forth as witnesses.

Latiaris accordingly made his approaches to Sabinus: he talked at first on trite and common topics, artfully making a transition to the fidelity of Sabinus, who did not, like others, follow the fortunes of a noble house, while fortune smiled, and, in the hour of adversity, sound his retreat with the rest of the sneaking train. He made honourable mention of Germanicus, and spoke of Agrippina in pathetic terms. Sabinus, with a mind enfeebled by misfortunes, and now softened by compassion, burst into a flood of tears. To emotions of tenderness resentment succeeded. He talked, with indignation, of the cruelty of Sejanus, of his pride, his arrogance, and his daring ambition. The emperor himself did not escape. From this time, like men who had unbosomed their secrets to each other, Latiaris and Sabinus joined in the closest union. They cultivated each other's friendship. Sabinus sought the company of his new confederate; he frequented his house, and without reserve, in the fullest confidence disclosed his inmost thoughts.

LXIX. The conspirators held it necessary, that the conversation of Sabinus should be heard by more than one. A place for this purpose, secure and solitary, was to be chosen. To listen behind doors, were to hazard a discovery; they might be seen or over-

heard, or some trifling accident might give the alarm. The scene of action at length was fixed. They chose the cavity between the roof of the house and the ceiling of the room. In that vile lurking hole, with an execrable design, three Roman senators lay concealed, their ears applied to chinks and crannies, listening to conversation, and by fraud collecting evidence. To complete this plan of iniquity, Latiaris met Sabinus in the street, and, under pretence of communicating secret intelligence, decoyed him to the house, and to the very room where the infamous eaves-droppers lay in ambush. In that recess Latiaris entered into conversation; he recalled past grievances; he stated recent calamities, and opened a train of evils still to come. Sabinus went over the same ground, more animated than before, and more in the detail. When griefs, which have been long pent up, once find a vent, men love to discharge the load that weighs upon the heart. From the materials thus collected, the conspirators drew up an accusation in form, and sent it to the emperor, with a memorial, to their own disgrace and infamy, setting forth the whole of their conduct. Rome was never at any period so distracted with anxiety and terror. Men were afraid of knowing each other; society was at a pause; relations, friends, and strangers, stood at gaze; no public meeting, no private confidence; things inanimate had ears, and roofs and walls were deemed informers.

LXX. On the calends of January, Tiberius despatched a letter to the senate, in which, after expressing, as usual in the beginning of the year, his prayers and vows for the commonwealth, he fell with severity on Sabinus. He charged him with a plot against his sovereign, and was corrupting, for that purpose, several of the imperial freemen. He concluded in terms neither dark nor ambiguous, demanding vengeance on the offender. Judgment of death was pronounced accordingly. Sabinus was seized and dragged through the streets to immediate execution. Muffled in his robe, his voice almost stifled, he presented to the gazing multitude a tragic spectacle. He cried out with what power of utterance he could, "Behold the

"bloody opening of the year! With victims like my-
"self Sejanus must be glutted!" He continued to struggle and throw his eyes around. Wherever he looked to whatever side he directed his voice, the people shrunk back dismayed; they fled, they disappeared; the public places and the forum were abandoned; the streets became a desert. In their confusion some returned to the same spot, as if willing to behold the horrid scene, alarmed for themselves, and dreading the crime of being terrified.

The general murmur was, "Will there never be a "day unpolluted with blood?—Amidst the rites and "ceremonies of a season sacred to religion, when all "business is at a stand, and the use of profane "words is by law prohibited, we hear the clank of "chains; we see the halter, and the murder of a fel-"low-citizen. The innovation, monstrous as it is, is "a deliberate act, the policy of Tiberius. He means "to make cruelty systematic. By this unheard-of "outrage, he gives public notice to magistrates, that "on the first day of the year, they are to open, not "only the temples and the altars, but also the dun-"geons and the charnel-house." Tiberius, in a short time after, sent despatches to the senate, commending the zeal of the fathers in bringing to condign punishment an enemy of the state. He added, that his life was embittered with anxiety, and the secret machinations of insidious enemies kept him in a constant alarm. Though he mentioned no one by name, his malice was understood to glance at Nero and Agrippina.

LXXI. The plan of this work professes to give the transactions of the year in chronological order. If that rule did not restrain me, I should here be tempted to anticipate the time, and, to gratify indignation, relate the vengeance that overtook Latiaris, Opsius, and the other actors in that horrible tragedy. Some of them were reserved for the reign of Caligula; but, even in the present period, the sword of justice was not suffered to remain inactive. The fact was, Tiberius made it a rule to protect his instruments of cruelty; but it was also in his nature to be satiated with the arts of

flagitious men: new tools of corruption listed in his service; and his former agents, worn out in guilt, neglected and despised, were cashiered at once, and left to the resentment of their enemies. But I forbear; the punishment that befel the murderers of Sabinus, and other miscreants equally detestable, shall be seen in its proper place.

The emperor's letter above mentioned being read in the senate, Asinius Gallus, whose sons were nephews to Agrippina, moved an address, requesting the prince to reveal his secret disquietude, that the wisdom of the fathers might remove all cause of complaint. Dissimulation was the darling practice of Tiberius, and he placed it in the rank of virtues. Hating detection, and jealous of prying eyes, he was now enraged against the man who seemed to have fathomed his latent meaning. Sejanus appeased his anger, not out of friendship to Gallus, but to leave Tiberius to the workings of his own gloomy temper. The favourite had studied the genius of his master. He knew that he could think with phlegm, slow to resolve, yet gathering rancour, and in the end, sure to break out with fiercer vengeance.

About this time died Julia, the grandaughter of Augustus, during that prince's reign convicted of adultery, and banished to the isle of Trimetus, near the coast of Apulia. At that place she languished in exile during a space of three-and-twenty years, a wretched dependant on the bounty of Livia, who first cut off the grandsons of Augustus, in their day of splendour, and then made a show of compassion for the rest of the family, who were suffered to survive in misery.

LXXII. In the course of this year the Frisians, a people dwelling beyond the Rhine, broke out into open acts of hostility. The cause of the insurrection was not the restless spirit of a nation impatient of the yoke; they were driven to despair by Roman avarice. A moderate tribute, such as suited the poverty of the people, consisting of raw hides for the use of the legions, had been formerly imposed by Drusus. To specify the exact size and quality of the hide, was an idea that never entered into the head of any man, till Olen-

nius, the first centurion of a legion, being appointed governor over the Frisians, collected a quantity of the hides of forest bulls, and made them the standard both of weight and dimension. To any other nation this would have been a grievous burthen, but was altogether impracticable in Germany, where the cattle, running wild in large tracts of forest, are of prodigious size, while the breed for domestic uses is remarkably small. The Frisians groaned under this oppressive demand. They gave up first their cattle, next their lands; and finally were obliged to see their wives and children carried into slavery by way of commutation. Discontent and bitter resentment filled the breasts of injured men. They applied for redress, but without effect. In despair they took up arms, they seized the tax-gatherers, and hung them upon gibbets. Olennius made his escape. He fled for refuge to a castle known by the name of FLEVUM, at that time garrisoned by a strong party of Romans and auxiliaries, who were stationed in that quarter for the defence of the country bordering on the German Ocean.

LXXIII. Intelligence of this revolt no sooner reached Lucius Apronius, at that time proprætor of the Lower Germany, than he drew together from the Upper Rhine a detachment of the legionary veterans, with the flower of the allied horse and infantry. Having now two armies, he sailed down the Rhine, and made a descent on the territory of the Frisians, then employed in a close blockade of Flevum castle. To defend their country against the invaders, the barbarians thought proper, on the approach of the Romans, to abandon the siege. The æstuaries in that country, formed by the influx of the sea, are a grand obstacle to military operations. Apronius ordered bridges to be prepared, and causeways to be thrown over the marshes. Meanwhile, the fords and shallows being discovered, he sent the cavalry of the Caninefates and the German infantry that served under him, with orders to pass over, and take post in the rear of the enemy. The Frisians, drawn up in order of battle, gave them a warm reception. The whole detachment, with the legionary horse sent to support the

ranks, was put to the rout. Apronius despatched three light cohorts; two more followed, and, in a short time, the whole cavalry of the auxiliaries; a force sufficient, had they made one joint attack: but coming up in separate divisions, and at different times, they were neither able to rally the broken ranks, nor, in the general panic, to make head against the enemy.

In this distress, Cethegus Labeo, who commanded the fifth legion, received orders to advance with the remainder of the allies. That officer soon found himself pressed on every side. He sent messenger after messenger to call forth the whole strength of the army. His own legion, being the fifth, rushed forward to his assistance. A sharp engagement followed. The barbarians, at length, gave ground; and the auxiliary cohorts, faint with fatigue, and disabled by their wounds, were rescued from the sword of the enemy. The Roman general neither pursued the fugitives, nor staid to bury the slain, though a number of tribunes and officers of rank, with centurions of distinguished bravery, lay dead on the field of battle. By deserters intelligence was afterwards brought, that no less than nine hundred Romans were surrounded in the forest called Baduhenna, and after a gallant defence, which lasted till the dawn of day, were to a man cut to pieces. Another body, consisting of no less than four hundred, threw themselves into a strong mansion belonging to Cruptorix, a German chief, who had formerly served in the Roman army: but this whole party, afraid of treachery, and dreading nothing so much as being delivered into the hands of the enemy, turned their swords against each other, and perished by mutual slaughter.

LXXIV. The name of the Frisians was, by consequence, celebrated throughout Germany. Tiberius, with his usual closeness, endeavoured to conceal the loss, aware that a war would call for a new commander, and that important trust he was unwilling to commit to any person whatever. As to the senate; events that happened on the remote frontiers of the empire, made little impression on that assembly. Domestic grievances were more interesting: every man trem-

bled for himself, and flattery was his only resource. With this spirit the fathers, at a time when matters of moment demanded their attention, made it their first business to decree an altar to Clemency, and another to Friendship; both to be decorated with the statues of Tiberius and Sejanus. They voted, at the same time, an humble address, requesting that the prince and his minister would condescend to show themselves to the people of Rome. Neither of them entered the city, nor even approached the suburbs. To leave their island on a sailing party, and exhibit themselves on the coast of Campania, was a sufficient favour.

To enjoy that transient view, all degrees and orders of men, the senators, the Roman knights, and the populace, pressed forward in crowds. The favourite attracted the attention of all, but was difficult of access. To gain admission to his presence was the work of cabal, intrigue, or connexion in guilt. Sejanus felt his natural arrogance inflamed and pampered by a scene of servility so openly displayed before him. He saw a whole people crouching in bondage. At Rome the infamy was not so visible. In a great and populous city, where all are in motion, the sycophant may creep unnoticed to pay his homage. In a vast conflux, numbers are constantly passing and repassing; but their business, their pursuits, whence they come, and whither they are going, no man knows. On the margin of the sea the case was different. Without distinction of rank, the nobles and the populace lay in the fields, or on the shore, humbly waiting, night and day, to court the smiles of the porter at the great man's gate, or to bear the insolence of slaves in office. Even that importunity was at length prohibited. The whole herd returned to Rome; some, who had been honoured with a word or a smile, sinking into the lowest dejection of spirits; others elate with joy, for they had seen the favourite, and did not then suspect how soon that fatal connexion was to overwhelm them all in ruin.

LXXV. The year closed with the marriage of Agrippina, one of the daughters of Germanicus. Tiberius gave her away in person to Cneius Domitius,

but ordered the nuptial ceremony to be performed at Rome. Domitius was descended from a splendid line of ancestors, and besides, allied to the house of Cæsar. He was the grandson of Octavia, and of course grand-nephew to Augustus. By this consideration, Tiberius was determined in his choice.

THE

ANNALS OF TACITUS.

BOOK V.

I. During the consulship of Rubellius Germinus and Fusius, who bore the same surname, died, in an advanced old age, the emperor's mother Livia, styled Julia Augusta. Illustrious by her descent from the house of Claudius, she was further ennobled by adoption into the Livian and the Julian families. She was first married to Tiberius Nero, and by him was the mother of two sons. Her husband, when the city of Perusia was obliged to surrender to the arms of Augustus, made his escape, and wandered from place to place, till the peace between Sextus Pompeius and the triumvirate restored him to his country. Enamoured of the graceful form and beauty of Livia, Augustus obliged her husband to resign her to his embraces. Whether she had consented to the change, is uncertain; but the passion of the emperor was so ardent, that, without waiting till she was delivered of the fruit of her womb, he conveyed her, pregnant as she was, to his own house. By this second marriage she had no issue; but Agrippina and Germanicus being joined in wedlock, Livia became allied to the house of Cæsar, and the issue of that match were the common great grand-children of Augustus and herself. Her domestic conduct was formed on the model of primitive manners; but by a graceful ease, unknown to her sex in the time of the republic, she had the address to soften the rigour of ancient virtue. A wife of amiable manners, yet a proud and imperious mother, she united in herself the opposite qualities that suited the specious arts of Augustus, and the dark dissimulation of her son. The rites of sepulture were performed without pomp or magnificence. Her will remained

for a long time unexecuted. The funeral oration was delivered from the rostrum by her great grandson Caius Cæsar, afterwards Caligula, the emperor.

II. Tiberius did not attend to pay the last melancholy duties to his mother. He continued to riot in voluptuous pleasures, but the weight of business was his apology to the senate. Public honours were, with great profusion, decreed to her memory: Tiberius, under the mask of moderation, retrenched the greatest part, expressly forbidding the forms of religious worship. On that point he knew the sentiments of his mother; it was her desire not to be deified. In the same letter that conveyed his directions to the senate, he passed a censure on the levity of female friendship; by that remark obliquely glancing at Fusius the consul, who owed his elevation to the partiality of Livia. The fact was, Fusius had brilliant talents. He possessed in an eminent degree, the art of recommending himself to the softer sex. His conversation sparkled with wit. In his lively sallies, he did not spare even Tiberius himself, forgetting that the raillery which plays with the foibles of the great, is long remembered, and seldom forgiven.

III. From this time may be dated the æra of a furious, headlong, and despotic government. The rage of Tiberius knew no bounds. While his mother lived, his passions were rebuked, and in some degree controlled. He had been from his infancy in the habit of submitting to her judgment; and to counteract her authority was more than Sejanus dared to undertake. By the death of Livia all restraint was thrown off. The prince and his minister broke out with unbridled fury. A letter was despatched to the senate, in bitter terms arraigning the conduct of Agrippina and her son Nero. The charge was generally supposed to have been framed, and even forwarded to Rome, during the life of Livia, but by her influence, for that time suppressed. The violence of the proceeding, so soon after her death, gave rise to the opinion entertained by the populace. The letter was conceived in a style of exquisite malice, containing, however, against the grandson no imputation of treason, no plot to levy war

against the state. The crimes objected to him were, unlawful pleasures, and a life of riot and debauchery. Agrippina's character was proof against the shafts of malice. Her haughty carriage and unconquerable pride were the only allegations that could be urged against her. The fathers sat in profound silence, covered with astonishment. At length that class of men, who by fair and honourable means had nothing to hope, seized the opportunity to convert to their own private advantage the troubles and misfortunes of their country. A motion was made that the contents of the letter should be taken into consideration. Cotta Messalinus, the most forward of the party, a man ever ready to join in any profligate vote, seconded the motion; but the leading members of the senate, particularly the magistrates, remained in a state of doubt and perplexity. They saw no ground for proceeding in a business of so high a nature, communicated indeed with acrimony, but wanting precision, and ending abruptly, without any clear or definite purpose.

IV. Junius Rusticus, who had been appointed by the emperor to register the acts of the fathers, was, at that time, present in the assembly. From the nature of his employment he was supposed to be in the secrets of his master. He rose on a sudden, under the impulse of some emotion unfelt before: magnanimity it was not, since he had never, upon any occasion, discovered one generous sentiment: perhaps he was deceived by his own political speculations, in the hurry of a confused and tumultuous judgment anticipating future mischief, but not attending to the combination of circumstances, that formed the present crisis. Whatever might be his motive, this man joined the moderate party, and advised the consul to adjourn the debate. He observed, that, in affairs of the great est moment, the slightest cause often produces events altogether new and unexpected. Grant an interval of time, and the passions of a superannuated emperor may relent. The populace, in the mean time, bearing aloft the images of Nero and Agrippina, surrounded the senate-house. They offered up their prayers

for the safety of the emperor, and with one voice pronounced the letter a wicked forgery, fabricated without the knowledge of Tiberius; a black contrivance to ruin the imperial family. The senate came to no resolution.

When the assembly was adjourned, a number of fictitious speeches, purporting to have been delivered by consular senators, in a strain of bitter invective against Sejanus, were immediately written, and dispersed among the people. In those productions, the several authors, unknown and safe in their obscurity, gave free scope to their talents, and poured forth their virulence with unbounded freedom. The artifice served to exasperate the minister. He charged the fathers with disaffection; "they paid no attention to "the remonstrance of the prince: the people were "ripe for tumult and insurrections. A new council "of state was set up, and the decrees of that mock "assembly were published with an air of authority. "What now remains for the discontented, but to un-"sheath the sword, and choose for their leaders, and "even proclaim as emperors, the very persons whose "images had been displayed as the banners of sedi-"tion and revolt?"

V. Tiberius was fired with indignation. He renewed his complaints against Agrippina and her son, and, in a proclamation, reprimanded the licentious spirit of the populace. He complained to the fathers in terms of keen reproach, that the authority of the prince was eluded, and, by the artifice of a single senator, despised and set at nought. He desired that the whole business, unprejudiced by their proceedings, should be reserved for his own decision. The fathers, without further debate, sent despatches to the emperor, assuring him, that, though they had not pronounced final judgment, having no commission for that purpose, that they were, notwithstanding, ready to prove their zeal, and would have inflicted a capital punishment, if the prince himself had not abridged their authority.

SUPPLEMENT.

1. The fathers, at all times pliant and obsequious, were, in this juncture, more willing than ever to debase themselves by every act of mean servility. Sejanus knew the inmost secrets of the prince, and the deep resentments that lay concealed, and nourished venom in his heart. Sure of a complying senate, he grew more aspiring, yet not bold enough to strike the decisive blow. His strength had hitherto laid in fraud and covert stratagem, and, having made an experiment of his talents, he resolved to proceed by the same insidious arts. Agrippina continued, with unabating spirit, to counteract his designs; and her two sons, Nero and Drusus, stood fair in the line of succession to the imperial dignity. The ambition of the minister required that all three should be removed. He began with Nero and Agrippina, well assured, that, after their destruction, the impetuous temper of Drusus would lay him open to the assaults of his enemies.

2. Rome, in the mean time, knew no pause from the rage of prosecutions. During the life of Livia, Tiberius felt some restraint; but, that check removed, he now broke out with redoubled fury. The most intimate friends of his mother, particularly those to whom she had recommended the care of her funeral, were devoted to destruction. In that number a man of equestrian rank, and of a distinguished character, was singled out from the rest, and condemned to the hard labour of drawing water in a crane. By the disgrace of an infamous punishment, the tyrant meant to spread a general terror. The cruelty of Sejanus kept pace with the exterminating fury of his master. His pride was wounded by the freedom with which the public spoke of his ambitious views. A band of informers was let loose, and by that hireling crew a civil war was waged against the first men in Rome. Spies were stationed in every quarter; the mirth of the gay, the sorrows of the wretched, the joke of innocent simplicity, and the wild rambling talk of men

in liquor, served to swell the list of constructive crimes. Nothing was safe; no place secure; informers spread terror and desolation through the city, and all ranks were swept away in one common ruin.

3. While by these acts of oppression Rome was made a scene of ruin and dismay, every other part of the empire enjoyed the most perfect tranquillity. It was the wish of Tiberius to have no war upon his hands, and with that view, it was his policy to let the provinces feel the mildness of his government. He rewarded merit, but with a sparing hand; to guilt he showed himself inexorable; the delinquent in a post of trust was sure to be punished with unremitting severity. He dreaded superior merit; and though at Rome virtue was a crime, in the provinces he forgave it. To his choice of general officers and foreign magistrates, no objection could be made; they were men of integrity, though seldom of distinguished talents. The jealousy of his nature would not allow him to employ the most eminent characters: and from mediocrity, though he could not hope for glory, he expected to derive the undisturbed tranquillity of his reign.

4. Marcus Vinicius and Lucius Cassius Longinus were the next consuls. By the management of Tiberius, things were now brought to the crisis, which in his heart he had long desired. The fathers had avowed their intention to pass a decree against Nero and Agrippina; but the clemency of the prince was supposed to hold that assembly in suspense. Tiberius, however, no longer hesitated. Sejanus represented to him the danger of irresolution or delay. The time, he said, called for sudden exertion. "The guilty had "thrown off the mask, and from seditious discourses, "proceeded to acts of open rebellion. The very se- "nate began to waver; private views seduced them "from their duty; the integrity of that body was no "longer certain. The soldiers threatened a revolt, "and Nero was already considered as the head of the "empire. Tiberius, indeed, reigned amidst the rocks "of Capreæ; but Agrippina and her son gave the law "at Rome." Inflamed by this reasoning, Tiberius

sent a letter to the fathers, in substance declaring "that his mind was on the rack, and various appre-"hensions, like an inward fire, consumed his peace. "He knew, by certain intelligence, that Nero and "Agrippina had formed a dangerous league; and the "storm, if not prevented, would ere long burst in ruin "on their heads."

5. The senate met in consternation. After a short debate, Agrippina and her son Nero were declared public enemies. This vote no sooner reached the ear of Tiberius, than he sent orders to a party of the prætorian guards to take them both into custody. The unhappy prisoners were loaded with fetters, and conveyed from place to place in a close litter, which not a ray of light could penetrate. In this manner they proceeded towards the coast of Campania. A band of soldiers guarded them in their progress through the country. The crowd was every where kept at a distance, and the eye of compassion no where suffered to behold their misery. Agrippina was detained, for some time, in a castle near Herculaneum, on the margin of the sea; while Tiberius from his island beheld, with malignant joy, the place where his state-prisoner pined in bitterness of heart. But even that distressful situation could not subdue the spirit of Agrippina. She did not forget that she was the grandaughter of Augustus, and the widow of Germanicus. Burning with resentment, and by every insult fired with indignation, she launched out with vehemence against the savage cruelty of the emperor. The centurion, who guarded her person, had his private orders; and the ferocity of his nature made him ready to obey. With brutal violence he raised his hand, and at a blow struck out one of her eyes. She wished for the hand of death to deliver her from the rage of her enemies. She resolved to die by abstinence; but even that last resource of the wretched was denied to her. Her mouth was opened against her will, and victuals were forced down her throat, in order to protract a life of misery. Such was the deep and studied malice of Tiberius: he destroyed numbers in his fury, and at times, with deliberate malice,

refused to let others die in peace. He kept them imprisoned in life, and made even his mercy the severest vengeance. To see those whom he hated in his heart, stretched on the torture of the mind, invoking death, yet forced to linger in slow-consuming pain, was the delight of that implacable, that obdurate mind. With that envenomed malignity he chose to extend the life of Agrippina. She was removed, under the care of a centurion, to the isle of Pandataria, where Julia, her unfortunate mother, closed her life in the last stage of wretchedness. By confining the daughter in the same place, he hoped, by a subtle stroke of malice, to load her with the imputation of similar vices, and thereby blacken a character which he saw was purity itself. Agrippina perceived the drift of his inhuman policy, and, no doubt, felt it with anguish of heart. How she endured the barbarity of her enemies for three years afterwards, we have now no means of knowing. Her death will be mentioned in due time and place.

Nero was banished to the Isle of Pontia, not far from Pandataria. About a year afterwards, the news of his death arrived at Rome, and spread a general face of mourning throughout the city. The current report was, that a centurion, sent by Tiberius, passed himself for an officer, commissioned by the senate to see immediate execution performed. This man displayed to view his instruments of death, and the young prince, terrified at the sight, put an end to his life. It is said, that, of the three sons of Germanicus, he was the only one, who by his graceful figure, and the elegance of his manners, recalled to the memory of men an image of his father.

6. Drusus and Caius (surnamed Caligula,) as soon as their brother Nero was banished, were considered by Sejanus as the two remaining props of the empire. Drusus stood nearest to the succession, and for that reason was the most obnoxious. Seduced by the arts of Sejanus, and further incited by his own inordinate ambition, that unhappy prince had joined in the conspiracy against his brother Nero; but what he thought would contribute to his elevation, became the fatal

cause of his ruin. He had been at an early period of his life contracted to Otho's daughter, who was then of tender years: but, without regarding that engagement, he married Æmilia Lepida, a woman of illustrious birth, but fatally bent on mischief, and, by her pernicious talents, able to execute the worst designs. Sejanus saw the use to be made of such a character. He had chosen Livia for his instrument to cut off Drusus, the son of Tiberius; and he now resolved, by the same execrable means to destroy the son of Germanicus. With this design, the grand corrupter in a short time gained the affections of the wife. In the course of his adulterous commerce, he instilled into her heart his own pernicious venom, and rendered her the implacable enemy of her husband. He promised to join her in the nuptial union, and with ideas of future grandeur so dazzled her imagination, that she undertook the detestable task of carrying to the ear of the emperor an accusation against her husband, who was then attending the court in the Isle of Capreæ.

Instructed by her seducer, and urged on by the ardour of her own libidinous passions, she alarmed Tiberius every day with some new allegation; she renewed, with studied artifice, all that had been imputed to Nero and Agrippina, and in their guilt, with affected reluctance, involved Drusus as an accomplice. She pretended, at the same time, to plead in his behalf. His crimes, she hoped, would admit of some extenuation: but her apology served only to envenom the charge. The emperor consulted with his minister. That artful politician espoused the cause of the young prince; he affected to disbelieve all that was alleged: but the proofs, in time, were too strong to be resisted; he yielded to the force of truth, still attempting to palliate, but by feeble excuses making the whole appear still more atrocious.

7. Drusus, unheard and undefended, received orders to depart forthwith from the Isle of Capreæ. He arrived at Rome, but not to live there in a state of security. He was pursued by the machinations of Sejanus. That artful and intriguing minister prevailed on Cassius Longinus, the consul, to arraign the cha-

racter and conduct of the young prince, before the assembly of the fathers. Though high in office, this man was base enough to forget his own dignity, and become the infamous tool of a vile and designing favourite. He stated to the senate, "that the young "prince, exasperated by his late disgrace, was pursu- "ing violent measures; and, in order to cause a sud- "den revolution, was every day endeavouring by in- "trigue, by cabal, and popular arts, to increase the "number of partisans." These allegations were, in fact, suborned by Sejanus: but the fathers were persuaded that the whole business originated with the emperor. A vote was accordingly passed, declaring Drusus an enemy to the state. This proceeding was no sooner reported to Tiberius, than he stood astonished at the measure; but his animosity to the house of Germanicus was not to be appeased. He gave orders, by letter to the senate, that his grandson should be confined a close prisoner in the lower part of the palace, with a constant guard over him, to watch his motions, to note his words, and keep a register of every circumstance, to be in time transmitted to Capreæ, for his private inspection. In that wretched condition, Drusus was left to pine in misery, till about three years afterwards, as will be mentioned in its place, he closed his dismal tragedy.

8. Tiberius saw, with inward satisfaction, the family of Germanicus well nigh extinguished. The measures by which their ruin had been accomplished, gratified the malice of his heart: but what motive induced Sejanus to be so active in the business, was a problem, which all his penetration was not able to solve. Did the minister mean to gratify the wishes of his sovereign? or was his own private ambition at the bottom? Tiberius was thrown into a state of perplexity. His jealousy took the alarm. From that moment he resolved to keep a watchful eye on the conduct of the minister. His keen discernment and systematic dissimulation were, perhaps, never so remarkable in any period of his life. He began to nourish suspicion; and, in a mind like his, suspicion was sure never to work in vain. In the memoirs of his

own life, which were found after his death, it appears that the first cause, that brought on the ruin of the favourite, was his eagerness to destroy the sons of Germanicus.

9. Meanwhile, Sejanus grew intoxicated with his good fortune: he saw the imperial dignity tottering on the head of an aged prince, and not likely to be better supported by Caligula, a young man as yet unequal to the cares of empire. He thought himself near the summit of his ambition: but to insure success, he resolved to plan his measures with care and circumspection. He addressed the prince in the style of a man, who had no private views, no motive but the interest of his sovereign. Tiberius knew that his professions were false and hollow. He resolved, however, to retaliate by the same insidious arts. He called Sejanus his best friend: the faithful minister, by whose vigilance the public peace was secured, and the glory of the empire maintained in its highest lustre. Not content with bestowing on him the warmest commendations, he added that the man who rendered such eminent services to the state, ought to be, at least, the second in rank and dignity.

10. The minister, in consequence of this exaggerated praise, became the idol of the people. The fathers passed several votes in his favour, and sent their deputies to the Isle of Capreæ, with addresses of congratulation. In the forum, in the temples, and in private houses, statues were erected to Sejanus. His birth-day was celebrated with religious ceremonies. The altars smoked with incense, and the city resounded with his praise. Men swore by the fortune of Tiberius and his faithful friend. Sejanus shared in all public honours with the emperor. Applauded by the senate, and adored by the multitude, he was now scarce inferior to his master.

11. It was in this juncture that Velleius Paterculus published his Epitome of Roman Affairs, from the foundation of the city down to his own times. The work is dedicated to Vinicius, one of the consuls for the year. It is to be regretted that a writer of so fine a genius was thrown on that evil period, in which the

Romans, formerly fierce with all the pride, and, perhaps, the excess of liberty, were fallen into the opposite extreme of abject slavery. The spirit of adulation debased the human character. This elegant author caught the infection of the times. He saw the senators, men of consular rank, the most illustrious of the Roman knights, and, in short, a whole people, prostrate at the feet of Tiberius and his favourite. He was carried away by the current, and hence we find him representing the Roman glory, that work of ages, and that toil of patriots, warriors, and legislators, resting at length upon an emperor, who lived in voluntary exile, and a minister, who had all the vices, without the talents of his master. The panegyric bestowed upon two such characters has survived the wreck of time; but it has survived, to be the disgrace of the author: a monument of venal praise and servile flattery. The beauty of the composition, and the graces of the style, are the work of a rhetorician, in whose hands history forgot her genuine character, and truth had been degraded. Paterculus stands at the head of those, who have been willing to list in the service of corruption; and, though the taste of the writer will not easily find a rival, the abject spirit of the man will be sure of having, in every age and country, a herd of imitators, as long as the leaders of party and faction shall wish to see their ambition disguised, and their vices decorated with the colours and the garb of virtue.

12. That Paterculus threw a temporary lustre round the name of his patron, there can be no room to doubt, since the varnish so well laid on, almost deceives us at the present hour. But Sejanus found a more powerful support in his two friends, Asinius Gallus and Lentulus Gætulicus. The former being, as has been mentioned, on bad terms with Tiberius, was the more ready to list in the faction of Sejanus. He became the zealous partisan of the minister, and drew to his interest the leading members of the senate. Gætulicus was, at this time, appointed to the command of the legions in the Upper Germany. He owed his promotion to the influence of Sejanus, to whose son

he had offered his daughter in marriage. This he knew would cement a closer union between him and his patron; and the patron, in the mean time, was not blind to the advantages which he himself might derive from that alliance. Lucius Apronius, the uncle of Gætulicus, was at the head of the army on the Lower Rhine; and, by forming a connexion with that family, Sejanus saw that, in fact, he should have eight legions at his beck. This was a prospect that flattered his hopes, and gave new ardour to that spirit of enterprise, which now began to hurry him on to the consummation of his wishes. Honours, dignities, all employments and places of trust, were granted at his will and pleasure, and to none but men ready to co-operate in his worst designs. The minister, thus supported, stood but one remove from the sovereign power; but his elevation placed him on the edge of a precipice, from which his fall would inevitably be sudden and terrible.

13. Tiberius, in the mean time, was ever on the watch. He observed all that passed, with acute but silent attention. Bending under the weight of years, and still a slave to his lewd desires, he was anxious to preserve his power to the last. With this view he continued to act with his usual policy; in appearance resigned to indolence, yet making use of his vices to shade his secret purposes. His whole attention was fixed on the conduct of Sejanus. The alliance projected between the minister and Gætulicus, who filled a post of such importance, alarmed his fears. The active zeal of Asinius Gallus was another cause of suspicion. He resolved to remove a man of so much weight, and, having formed that deep design, he soon seized his opportunity to carry it into execution.

14. Asinius Gallus, still persisting to exert himself in the interest of Sejanus, made a florid speech in the senate, concluding with a string of new honours to be decreed to the favourite. The motion succeeded to his wishes. He was deputed by the fathers to know the emperor's pleasure. During his stay at the Isle of Capreæ, Tiberius sent a letter to the senate, representing him as a disturber of the public peace, and in di-

rect terms requiring that he should be forthwith secured in the house of one of the consuls. The fathers knew that delay on their part would be considered as a crime. Having offended in the case of Agrippina, and not daring to provoke resentment a second time, they obeyed without hesitation. A prætor was despatched to the Isle of Capreæ, to take charge of the prisoner. Asinius, in the mean time, was ignorant of all that passed at Rome. He was well received by the emperor, a constant guest at his table, and a sharer in all his pleasures. In the gaiety of a social hour, he was informed of the judgment pronounced against him by the senate. The first emotions of surprise overpowered his reason. In order to secure, by a voluntary death, his fortune for his children, he endeavoured to lay violent hands on himself. Tiberius dissuaded him from his purpose, giving him at the same time strong assurances that he might safely rely on the protection of the prince and the favour of Sejanus. Asinius yielded to that advice. He was conveyed to Rome under a guard, and there, without being heard in his defence, thrown into close confinement, shut up from the sight of his friends, and debarred from all food, except what was necessary to prolong his life. His friend Syriacus, a man distinguished by his talents and his eloquence, met with a gentler punishment. His intimacy with Asinius was his only crime, and for that he was put to instant death; happy to escape from the power of a tyrant, who, by a refinement in cruelty, made life itself the worst tor ture he could inflict.

15. Sejanus was now persuaded that the sovereign power was within his grasp. Dazzled by that glittering scene, he did not perceive that the ruin of Asinius was a blow aimed at himself. Tiberius still continued to watch the motions of the minister, weighing every circumstance, and brooding in silence over his own designs. He conversed in private with Sejanus; he perused his countenance; he explored his secret thoughts, and from what he saw and heard drew his own conclusions. A penetrating observer of mankind, he knew that prosperity is the surest discoverer of the

human heart. He resolved, therefore, to ply Sejanus with marks of the warmest affection; he lavished his favours on him with unbounded generosity; he praised his unremitting labours in the service of his prince; and, to put him off his guard, determined to overwhelm him with a load of grandeur. The marriage with Livia, the widow of his son Drusus, which he had formerly rejected, he knew would intoxicate the vanity of the ambitious minister. With that view he gave his consent to the match, resolved by acts of kindness to prove the secrets of the heart. Tiberius did not stop here. He was aware that Sejanus, while he remained at Capreæ, would act with circumspection; but, if removed to a distance, would most probably drop the mask. In a solitary island, the favourite had every thing in his power; the prætorian guards, stationed on the spot, were under his command, and all despatches to the prince passed through their hands. Sejanus was, by consequence, master of every thing. He could suppress or deliver what he thought proper. The court was filled with his creatures, all of them spies upon the actions of the prince, and all devoted to the minister.

16. Tiberius felt these disadvantages, and accordingly devised an artful plan to free himself from the embarrassment. Under colour of doing honour to his friend, but, in truth, to remove him from his presence, he proposed to make him joint consul with himself. The functions of that high office, he well knew, would require the constant residence of the magistrate at a distance from Capreæ; and the emperor from his solitary rock, as from a watch tower, might superintend all his measures. There was besides, another advantage, of the first consequence to Tiberius. While the consul passed his whole time at Rome, the prætorian guards would be weaned from their former master, and, if necessary, Macro might be despatched to undertake the command, under a plausible promise to resign, whenever the minister should be at leisure from the duties of his magistracy, to resume his station. Macro approved of this new arrangement. With the true spirit of a court sycophant, wishing for an

opportunity to creep into favour, he professed himself devoted to the service of his prince, while, in fact, he was determined, by every sinister art, to supplant a proud and domineering favourite.

17. Sejanus, amidst all the dignities so liberally heaped upon him, little suspected an underplot to work his ruin. He continued, with every mark of a fawning spirit, to ingratiate himself with the emperor; he was the sole fountain of court favour; he looked down with contempt upon the young Caligula; and of the twin-born sons of Drusus, the one who still survived was too young to alarm his jealousy. He received the homage of his creatures; he distributed presents with magnificence, and still took care to keep the prince immersed in luxury. Tiberius saw, with inward pleasure, the towering spirit of the consul elect. Increasing honours, he had no doubt, would unprovide his mind, and in a short time, produce the genuine features of his character.

18. We enter now upon the fifth consulship of Tiberius, with Sejanus for his colleague. While the emperor remained in his solitary island, Sejanus made his entry into Rome, with the pomp of a sovereign prince taking possession of his dominions. The streets resounded with peals of joy. The senators, the Roman knights, all ranks of men pressed round the new consul with their congratulations. His house was crowded, his gates were besieged, and all were eager to pay their court. They knew the jealousy of a man raised to a sudden elevation; they dreaded the danger of neglect or inattention; and all were willing to crawl in servitude. The prevailing opinion was, that Tiberius, worn out with age, and no longer equal to a weight of cares, would, for the remainder of his days, resign himself to his usual pleasures, content with the shadow of imperial grandeur, while the administration went on in his name, though conducted by his favourite. Tiberius seemed no more than the lord of an island, while Sejanus was considered as the vicegerent of the emperor, the actual governor of the Roman world. In this persuasion all bowed down before him; they approached his presence with a degree of

respect little short of adoration; his statues were set up in every quarter; curule chairs were decorated with gold; victims were slain, and, in the honours offered to the minister, the prince was only mentioned for the sake of form, in conformity to established usage. Religious worship was not yet offered to the ambitious magistrate; but the men who blushed to go to that extreme, fell prostrate before his statues, and there poured forth their impious vows.

19. Tiberius had regular intelligence of all that passed; but the time was not arrived, when the secrets of that dark designing mind were to transpire. He lay in wait for further particulars. In the mean time, he addressed himself to Lucius Piso, a man descended from a father of censorian rank, who possessed the happy art of knowing how to avoid the extremes of liberty and mean submission. Acting always with temper and with wisdom, he had recommended himself to the esteem and favour of Tiberius. He could mix in scenes of luxury, and yet retain his virtue. Being præfect of Rome, he was, by consequence, a confidential minister, entrusted with all the secrets of the court. Tiberius requested him, as a proof of his fidelity, to take careful notice of all that passed in the city, and to transmit to Capreæ an exact account of the proceedings in the senate, the language of the Roman knights, the discontents and clamours of the populace, and, above all, the cabals, intrigues, and every action of the consul. Wishing still to deceive by fair appearances, he took care, in his letters to the senate, to make honourable mention of Sejanus, styling him, on all occasions, the prop and guardian of the empire, his associate in the administration; his dear, his well-beloved Sejanus.

20. Encouraged by these marks of favour, the new consul, to make his authority felt, resolved to let fall the weight of his power on all, who scorned to bend before him with abject humility. He began with Germinius Rufus on a charge of violated majesty. Rufus appeared before the senate. His defence was short, but delivered with magnanimity. "The man," he said, "who stands accused of being an enemy to the

"prince, has by his will made that very prince equal "heir with his own children." Having uttered these words, he laid the will on the table and withdrew to his own house. A quæstor followed to acquaint him with the sentence of the fathers. Rufus no sooner saw the messenger, than he drew his sword, and, plunging it in his breast, "Behold," he said, "how a "man of honour can die: go, and report what you "have seen to the senate." He spoke and breathed his last. Prisca his wife was involved in the prosecution. She appeared before the fathers, determined to emulate the example of her husband. They began to interrogate her: in that instant she drew a dagger, which she had concealed under her robe, and giving herself a mortal stab, expired on the spot.

21. While Sejanus, to gratify his vengeance, laid waste the city of Rome, Tiberius looked on with calm indifference. The destruction of men obnoxious for their virtue, gratified his natural cruelty; and the public detestation, he was sure, would in the end fall on the minister. The senate, in the mean time, went on in a style of abject submission. Flattery was well nigh exhausted; but the members of that assembly were determined to rack their invention for new proofs of sordid meanness. They lamented that the dignity of the consulship was lessened by the shortness of its duration, and therefore voted that Tiberius and his colleague should continue in office for the space of five years. Sejanus was now at the pinnacle of his wishes. He saw the emperor near the verge of life, and sure of enjoying the consular authority after the death of his master, he made no doubt of succeeding to the sovereign power.

22. In due time the decree for extending the consulship to a longer term was communicated to Tiberius. Nothing could be more opposite to his intention. He was willing to let Sejanus, by his acts of cruelty, provoke the ill will of the people; but to prolong his power, was no part of his plan. He expressed his dislike of the measure, but in terms of gentle reproof; determined neither to discover his hidden purposes, nor to irritate the pride of his colleague by an abrupt

refusal. He observed to the senate, "that their late "decree was an infringement of the constitution. It "had been the wisdom of the fathers to declare, that "the consulship should not, of necessity, last an entire "year. By making it a quinquennial office, they "would withhold from men of eminence the reward "due to their public services, and the provinces would "be deprived of able governors. It was for the wis- "dom of the senate to consider, not what would do "honour to the prince and his dearly beloved col- "league, but what would be most conducive to the "happiness and good order of the empire. That, and "that only, was the object which he and Sejanus had "nearest their hearts; and, in comparison with that "great object, they disregarded public honours." He despatched at the same time, a private letter to Sejanus, advising him to abdicate his office; and, to induce him to it by his own example, he sent a letter of resignation. Sejanus felt the disappointment. Unwilling, however, to make known the wound which his pride had suffered, he complied with the emperor's directions, and, about the middle of May, went out of office, soon to have a more dreadful fall.

23. On the seventh of the ides of May, Cornelius Sylla and Sexteidius Catullinus succeeded to the consulship. They were appointed for three months. Tiberius continued to manage appearances, still mysterious, close, and impenetrable. Sejanus, on his part, was not free from anxiety. He saw a change in the affections of the emperor, and, for that reason, wished to revisit Capreæ. In the solitude of that place he had no doubt but he could again wind himself into favour, or, if necessary, he could there, with better advantage, pursue the road of his ambition. His ostensible reasons for desiring to return were, the ill health of Livia, who required a change of air; and, after a long separation, his own earnest wish to have an interview with his sovereign. Tiberius was not to be deceived. He returned for an answer, that he also languished for a sight of his friend; but the service of the state required that so able a minister should remain at Rome. He intended shortly to visit the capi-

tal, and should there embrace Sejanus. In his letters to the senate he had the art to blend hints of dislike with marks of affection; and, though still equivocal, he gave some reason to think, that he was weaning himself from his favourite. He mentioned him slightly, or hinted some exception, and occasionally passed him by in silence. He talked of himself as a superannuated prince, worn out with infirmities, and near his end. In his next letters he was perfectly recovered, and on the point of setting out for Rome. The people were the dupes of his fallacy, while he remained fixed in his retreat, content to reign in solitary grandeur.

24. Tiberius thought it time to unmask another battery against Sejanus. He had invited the young Caligula to his court, and, having made him put on the manly gown, he desired that the senate would invest him with the dignities of augur and pontiff, both vacant by the banishment of his brother Nero. Of Claudius (afterwards emperor) he took no notice. That prince had never been adopted into the Cæsarian family. He lived at Rome, neglected and despised by the court of Tiberius. Antonia, his mother, used to say, that nature began to mould him, but had not finished her work. Perception and memory were faculties which he did not want; but judgment and elocution were withheld from him. In his private studies he made considerable acquisitions in literature; but in public he lost his recollection, and with it the power of thinking. When under the operation of fear, he seemed torpid and insensible; and sudden fear continued to haunt him in every stage of life, and even on the throne. No wonder that Tiberius held him in no kind of estimation; but the honours conferred upon Caligula, he knew, would prove a mortal stab to the ambition of Sejanus. Still, however, to amuse the favourite with delusive hopes, he required a grant from the senate of two more pontificates, one for Sejanus, and the other for his eldest son. By this ambiguous conduct the people of Rome were held in suspense. Whether they were to expect an account of the emperor's death, or in a short time to see him

in the city, was a point not to be ascertained. Meanwhile, the senate, ever prone to flattery, passed a vote, investing Sejanus with the title of proconsul, and at the same time, declaring his conduct in his magistracy a model for the imitation of all future consuls.

25. Sejanus began to fluctuate between hope and fear; but the senate showing still the same obsequious behaviour, he flattered himself that he should be able to reach the summit of his ambition. Religious worship continued to be offered to him. It is said, that he assisted in person at the celebration of the rites, at once the god and the priest of his own altar. Tiberius knew the effect of superstition on the public mind. To deprive Sejanus of that advantage, he wrote to the senate, complaining, that, in direct opposition to the principles of religion and to common sense, the worship due to the gods alone was impiously transferred to mortal man. He ordered that no such honours should be paid to himself, and, by consequence, left Sejanus exposed to the contempt and derision of the people.

26. At Rome it was now understood that the emperor was alienated from the man who had been raised to such a height of power and grandeur. Sejanus began to open his eyes, and to see at length a reverse of fortune. He found that he had been the bubble of a politic prince, who had been, during his whole life, exercised in the arts of dissimulation, and was grown a perfect master in the arts of deceit and cruelty. The young Caligula was, in appearance, high in favour with his grandfather, and the hearts of the people were at all times ready to espouse the family of Germanicus. The disappointed minister saw, too late, the want of resolution which restrained him, during his consulship, when the whole power of the state was in his own hands. In the arts of fraud he saw that he was no match for a systematic politician, who planned his measures in the gloom of solitude, and never let his counsels transpire, till in one and the same instant they were known and felt. Sejanus resolved to retrieve his loss, and by one vigorous effort

to decide the fate of empire. He called together his friends and followers; he paid court to such as seemed disaffected; he held forth rewards and promises, and, having increased the number of his partisans, formed a bold conspiracy, resolved by any means to seize the sovereign power.

27. A powerful league was formed with astonishing rapidity, and great numbers of all descriptions, senators as well as military men, entered into the plot. Among these, Satrius Secundus was the confidential friend and prime agent of the minister. We have seen this man let loose by Sejanus against the life of Cremutius Cordus, and now we are to see him, with the arts in which he had been trained, employed against his master. Whatever was his motive, whether fear, or views of interest, or ingratitude (for no principle of honour can be imputed to him,) he resolved to betray the secret to Tiberius. For this purpose he addressed himself to Antonia, the daughter of Antony the triumvir, the widow of Drusus, and the mother of Germanicus. The character of this illustrious woman was honoured by the court, and revered by the people. She lost her husband in the prime of life, when she had still the attractions of youth and beauty; and, though Augustus proposed to her several advantageous matches, she remained faithful to her first vows, and declined every overture. Her dignity was free from pride; she had virtue without ostentation, and an elevation of mind without the ambition and haughty spirit of Agrippina, her daughter-in-law. She saw her grandchildren cut off by the wicked arts of Sejanus, and in silent grief lamented the downfall of her family. When Nero was banished to the isle of Pontia, and Drusus lay confined in a dungeon, she took Caligula their brother under her protection, and hoped that her house would prove a sanctuary for the last surviving issue of Germanicus. Her conduct gave no umbrage to Tiberius. He respected her character, and, perhaps for that reason, was inclined, at last, to show some favour to Caligula.

Satrius, the conspirator, had no avenues of approach to Tiberius. He therefore made his advances to An-

tonia, concluding, that, by a stroke of perfidy, he might promote his interest in that quarter. His design was no sooner conceived than executed. He gained access to Antonia, and made a full discovery of the whole conspiracy. That prudent woman heard the particulars, and, without delay, sent despatches, to the emperor by one of her slaves, whose name was Pallas: the same who afterwards figured in a higher character, under the emperor Claudius.

28. Tiberius was astonished, but not dismayed. The danger pressed; his habitual slowness was out of season; the time called for vigour and decisive measures. He sent Macro to Rome, with a special commission to take upon him the command of the prætorian guards. He added full instructions for his conduct on all emergencies. If he found that Sejanus and his party were able to stir up an insurrection, he desired that Drusus should be led forth from his confinement, and presented to the people as their leader. The son of Germanicus, he was aware, would triumph over an obscure native of Vulsinii. In the mean time, Tiberius was determined to be prepared for all possible events. He ordered the fleet, that lay at Misenum, to assemble at the isle of Capreæ, with intent, if any disaster happened, to sail to some distant coast, and put himself at the head of such of the legions as still remained faithful to their prince. In order to obtain the quickest intelligence, he ordered signals to be disposed along the sea-shore, on the whole way from Surrentum to Rome.

29. The consuls at this time were Memmius Regulus and Fulcinius Trio, both appointed to fill the office from the middle of August to the end of the year. Trio had rendered himself infamous by the prosecution of Libo: he was besides known to be the tool and creature of Sejanus. Regulus was of a different mould, from his upright conduct deriving great consequence, and, at that time, much esteemed by Tiberius. The prætorian bands, as already stated, were under the influence of Sejanus. With the cohorts, that formed the city guard, the case was different. Subject to the control of Piso, who was then

præfect of Rome, they had no connexion with the minister. Under Piso, Græcinus Laco was their commanding officer; a man distinguished by his military talents and his firm integrity. In this posture of affairs, Macro arrived from Capreæ. He entered the city in a private manner, after the close of day, and went directly to Regulus the consul. He communicated the emperor's orders. Laco was called to the meeting. They consulted together, and settled their plan of operations for the following day. Tiberius, in this interval of suspense, took his station on the sharp point of a rock, surveying the deep that rolled beneath, and with an anxious eye gazing at the opposite shore for the earliest intelligence.

30. The fatal day arrived, namely, the fifteenth before the calends of November. Early in the morning, by order of Regulus, a report was spread, that letters were arrived at Rome, in which the emperor signified his intention to associate Sejanus with himself in the tribunitian power. The senate was summoned to meet in the temple of Apollo, near the imperial palace. Sejanus attended without delay. A party of the prætorians followed him. Macro met him in the vestibule of the temple. He approached the minister with all demonstrations of profound respect, and taking him aside, "Be not surprised," he said "that you have no "letter from the prince: it is his pleasure to declare "you his colleague in the tribunitian power; but he "thinks that a matter of so much importance should be "communicated to the fathers, by the voice of the "consuls. I am going to deliver the emperor's or-"ders." Sejanus, elate with joy, and flushed with his new dignity, entered the senate-house. Macro followed him. As soon as the consuls arrived, he delivered the letter from Tiberius, and immediately went forth to the prætorian guards. He informed them, that, by order of the prince, a large donation was to be distributed among the soldiers. He added, that, by a new commission, he himself was appointed their commanding officer, and, if they followed him to the camp, they would there receive the promised bounty. The lure was not thrown out in vain; the præto-

rian guards quitted their station. Laco, who stood near at hand, immediately surrounded the senate-house with a body of the city cohorts.

31. The letter to the consuls was confused, embarrassed, and with studied art drawn into length, in order to keep the minds of the fathers in suspense, while Macro gained time to execute what had been concerted. Regulus read the letter; it began with general observations, expatiating at large on the state of the empire: a short expression glanced at Sejanus: new matter followed; and then, winding round with art, hints were thrown out against the minister, in a perplexed style, vague, and ambiguous. It went on in the same obscure manner, intermixing things wholly unconnected, but at each return more pointed against Sejanus, till at last the language of open invective left no room for doubt. The fathers were covered with astonishment. The change of men's minds in the vicissitudes of human affairs, was never more remarkable. Those, who a little time before, congratulated Sejanus on his new dignities, began to shun him as they would a contagion. The conclusion of the letter was like a stroke of thunder. The emperor ordered two senators, who had joined in the conspiracy, to be put to death, and Sejanus to be thrown into prison. He signified, at the same time, his intention to return to Rome, and, for that purpose, desired that one of the consuls should be sent with a military guard as far as Capreæ, in order to conduct an infirm old man in safety to the capital.

32. Sejanus kept his seat like a man benumbed, senseless, stupid with amazement. His friends deserted him on every side. He remained in confusion, pale, and trembling, left in solitude, till the prætors and tribunes of the people gathered round him. Regulus called to him, "Rise, Sejanus, and follow me." The ruined favourite looked like a statue of Despair. He gazed, but understood nothing; he remained torpid, motionless, as if he had lost the faculty of hearing. The consul raised his arm, and, in a tone of menace, repeated his words no less than three times. Sejanus rose in consternation. The door of the senate-house

was thrown open: Græcinus Laco entered, and secured his prisoner. Regulus did not think it prudent to put the question to the assembly; but contenting himself with the voice of a single senator, ordered Sejanus to be loaded with irons, and in that condition, at the head of a numerous body of magistrates, conducted him to prison.

33. The downfall of Sejanus filled the city with exultation. The populace, who worshipped him in the hour of prosperity, rejoiced to see the sad catastrophe to which he was now reduced. They followed in crowds, rending the air with shouts, and pouring forth a torrent of abuse and scurrilous language. The prisoner endeavoured to hide his face; but the mob delighted to see remorse and shame, and guilt and horror in every feature of that distracted countenance. They reviled him for his acts of cruelty; they laughed at his wild ambition; they tore down his images, and dashed his statues to pieces. He was doomed by Tiberius to suffer death on that very day; but, as he had a powerful faction in the senate, it was not thought advisable, for the mere formality of a regular condemnation, to hazard a debate. Private orders were given to Macro, to despatch him without delay; but the consul, seeing the dispositions of the people and the calm neutrality of the prætorian guards, judged it best to re-assemble the fathers. They met in the temple of Concord. With one voice Sejanus was condemned to die, and the sentence was executed without delay. He was strangled in the prison. His body was dragged to the Gemonæ, and, after every species of insult from the populace, at the end of three days was thrown into the Tiber. Such was the tragic end of that ambitious favourite. He fell a terrible example to all, who, in any age or country, may hereafter endeavour by their vices to rise above their fellow-citizens.

34. The execration, with which the populace treated the ruined minister, was perhaps nothing more than the variable humour of a giddy multitude. In the zenith of his power Sejanus met with obsequious servility from all orders of men; and, had he conti-

nued to flourish in prosperity, there is too much reason to infer from the temper of the times, that the same debasement of the human character would have continued. The senate followed the example of the people. They passed a decree, by which "it was declared unlawful to wear mourning apparel for the "deceased minister; his name was ordered to be "erased out of the calendar, and all public registers; "the statue of Liberty was to be erected in the forum; "a day of public rejoicing was appointed, and the anniversary of his execution was to be celebrated with "solemn games and public spectacles, to be exhibited "by the sacerdotal college and the sodality of Augustan priests." The fathers went still farther: that the state might never again be deemed a prey for the enterprising genius of every worthless upstart, it was declared, "that for the future, no Roman citizen should "be invested with extravagant honours, and that public oaths should never be sworn upon any name but "that of the emperor."

35. It is fatally too true, that, when the public mind has been debased by shame and servitude, the genuine tone of liberty, and the firmness of an independent spirit, are not easily recovered. That very senate which, in the late decree, had shown some signs of life, was, notwithstanding, dead to all sense of public virtue. Adulation and time-serving flattery were grown inveterate. New honours were to be invented for a prince, who deserted his post, and left the seat of empire, to hide himself from the world, the lord of a barren island, the shadow of an emperor. It was, however, decreed, that he should be styled "the father of his country, and "that his birth-day should be celebrated with equestrian games, and other demonstrations of joy." Macro and Græcinus Laco were considered as men, who deserved to stand high in the estimation of the emperor. Flattery, therefore, was to prepare her incense for those exalted characters. Besides a large sum of money, to be paid, as a reward for their services, out of the public treasury, the ensigns of prætorian dignity were granted to Macro, and the quæstorian rank to Laco. The former was also complimented

with a seat in the theatre among the senators, and the honour of wearing a robe bordered with purple, at the celebration of the votive games. In this manner, after the downfall of one favourite, two new ones were to mount the scene. But, from the late event, those officers had learned a lesson of prudence: they declined the honours so lavishly bestowed upon them.

36. Meanwhile, Tiberius was apprised of all that passed at Rome. From the jutting eminence of a sharp-pointed rock he had seen the signals along the coast, and special messengers had been sent to give him the earliest information. Rome, in the mean time, was a scene of tumult and wild commotion. The prætorian guards beheld with a jealous eye the preference given to the city cohorts. Enraged to find that no confidence was reposed in themselves, the whole corps rushed, with licentious fury, into the city, and there bore down all before them, committing depredations in every quarter, and levelling houses to the ground. The populace were no less inflamed against the creatures of Sejanus. They seized on all who had been instruments of his cruelty, and, executing the summary justice of an enraged multitude, glutted their thirst of blood. Tiberius wrote to the magistrates, in the strongest terms, requiring them to quell all insurrections, and restore the public peace. The fate of Sejanus filled him with emotions of joy too strong to be concealed; but in all other matters nothing could lay open the secret workings of that involved and gloomy spirit. He was never at any time more abstruse, dark, and unintelligible. He refused to see the deputies sent by the senate: he rejected the honours which had been decreed to him; and even Memmius Regulus, the consul, who had served him so faithfully, was not admitted to his presence: hating the commerce of mankind, he retired, with a sullen spirit, to one of his mansions, called the Villa of Jupiter, and there continued ruminating in solitude for several months.

37. The deputies of the senate returned to Rome, but with no pleasing account of their expedition. The behaviour of the prince was a mystery, which no man could explain. The fathers, however, concluded, that

to satisfy the vengeance of the emperor, more work remained on their hands. The friends, relations, and followers of Sejanus, were ordered into custody. His uncle, Junius Blæsus, was put to death. The charge against him can not now be stated: but he was a man of eminence, who, to consummate military talents, united great political wisdom: in the eyes of Tiberius, that was a sufficient crime. The eldest son of Sejanus, though too young to be engaged in his father's plot, was also doomed a sacrifice. Apicata, who, as already mentioned, had been repudiated by Sejanus, was not condemned by the senate; but the sight of her son's body, thrown into the common charnel, made life a load no longer to be endured. She drew up a memorial, containing a full detail of the wicked arts, with which her husband and the younger Livia brought Drusus, the emperor's son, to an untimely death. Having finished her account of that black transaction, she sent it by a trusty messenger to the Isle of Capreæ, and put a period to her days.

38. Tiberius was still in his villa, sequestered from the eyes of mankind; but the detection of that horrible murder roused him from his lethargy. He had till then believed that Drusus died of a disorder occasioned by his own intemperance; but being at length acquainted with that scene of villany, he sent despatches to the senate, demanding vengeance on all who were any way concerned in the murder of his son. Eudemus, the physician, and Lygdus, the eunuch, were put to the rack, and with their dying breath, confessed all the particulars of that horrible tragedy. Livia, the widow of Drusus, was taken into custody. According to some historians, Tiberius gave her up to her mother, Antonia; and that good woman, who thought it of the essence of virtue, that guilt of so black a dye should not remain unpunished, left her to die by famine. But this account does not seem worthy of credit. In the case of a murdered son, why should Tiberius, a man by nature harsh and vindictive, hesitate to execute the stroke of justice on a woman of so abandoned a character? It is certain that he passed several days in close inquiry into all the circumstances of that

transaction; and when the fact was proved beyond the possibility of a doubt; when the emperor saw his own immediate issue, the only one of his family, for whom he retained a spark of affection, snatched away by the treachery of an unnatural mother; can it be supposed that he felt any compassion for the person who imbrued her hands in the blood of her husband, and was, besides, the sister of Germanicus?

39. Livia, the vile accomplice of Sejanus, was brought to condign punishment; and, after duly weighing the testimony of writers who lived near the time, it may be assumed as an historical fact, that she suffered by the order of Tiberius. The man, who in the isle of Rhodes gave strong indications of his innate cruelty, and, at that early period, was called by his rhetorical preceptor, "a composition of mud mixed with blood;" who became, in time, so hardened by repeated murders, as to set no kind of value on the lives of the most upright citizens, was not likely to feel the smallest touch of compunction, when revenge was prompted to strike the blow, which justice warranted. It is well known, that, in talking of the lot of Priam, he gave it as his opinion, that the Asiatic prince did not know how to form a true estimate of human felicity. Priam's happiness, he said, consisted in the rare event of having survived all his race. Tiberius was living fast to enjoy that portion of worldly bliss. Drusus, the son of Germanicus, languished in a dungeon, condemned never again to see the light of the sun; and if Caligula was to be spared, it was for the reason given by Tiberius himself, who used to say, "I suffer that son of Germanicus to live, that he may "be, in time, a public calamity, and the fatal author "of his own destruction. In him I nourish a serpent "for the people of Rome, and another Phæton for the "world at large."

40. It will not be unfit to mention, in this place, a few instances of that savage cruelty, which the tyrant practised in his lone retreat; and which, though well authenticated, can not now be referred to any particular year. The place of execution, where so many unhappy wretches died in misery, is still shown amidst the

rocks of Capreæ. It stood on a jutting eminence; and from that fatal spot all who incurred his displeasure were, after enduring the most exquisite torments, thrown headlong into the sea, where a crew of mariners waited to receive them, with orders, that no spark of life might remain unextinguished, to break their limbs, and crush their mangled bodies.

Besides a number of his old friends and confidential inmates, whom he retained near his person, he drew from Rome no less than twenty of the most eminent citizens, to be his chief advisers, and to form his cabinet-council. Of these chosen favourites, if we except two or three at most, the whole number was, for different reasons, put to death. Sejanus was the most distinguished victim; a man taken into favour, at first perhaps with personal regard, and motives of real friendship; but, as there is now room to think, continued in office for political reasons. By raising this man to the summit of power, and styling him his associate in the administration, Tiberius, probably, meant to throw the odium of his worst and most oppressive deeds on the favourite minister: with his assistance, perhaps, he thought that the hated house of Germanicus would be more easily crushed, and, in consequence of that measure, that the succession to the imperial dignity might be secured for the surviving issue of his son Drusus. That point accomplished, a politic and designing prince, like Tiberius, would not be at a loss how to discard, or even ruin the minister, who had conducted his pernicious measures to the end desired. It is highly probable, that, when he conferred the greatest honours on Sejanus, he had even then planned his destruction. While he raised the superstructure, he was secretly employed in sapping the foundation. Such was the genius of Tiberius: by nature subtle, dark, designing, and always mysterious, he had exercised his talents in the school of politics, and became, by constant practice, the great master of craft and dissimulation. What he could do by an act of power, he chose rather to accomplish by the crooked means of deceit and stratagem. There never occurred a juncture, in which he was not able to

overwhelm Sejanus, by barely signifying his will and pleasure. An obsequious senate was ready either to pay homage to the favourite, or at a blow to dispatch the man, whom they beheld with envy and secret detestation. The charge against Sejanus was no sooner opened, than the fathers, without further inquiry, pronounced his final doom. The event showed the nature of that assembly.

41. In all cases of importance, when either a real delinquent was to be brought to justice, or an eminent citizen was to suffer for his talents and his virtue, we have seen that Tiberius affected still to preserve the forms of a regular constitution, and to consider the senate as the supreme court of judicature. From the decision of the fathers he hoped to borrow some degree of sanction to colour the violence of his own proceedings. This policy, however, was confined to persons of high consideration in the state. In his solitary island he committed petty murders without remorse, or ceremony. He had ordered a person, whom he suspected as an accomplice in the destruction of his son Drusus, to attend his presence in the Isle of Capreæ; and it happened that he had invited, at the same time, a friend from Rhodes, on a visit of pleasure. The friend arrived first, and no sooner set his foot on shore than he was seized by the guards, and as a delinquent hurried away and put to the rack. Tiberius heard of the mistake, but was no otherwise moved, than to say, with calm composure: "Since you have begun with him, you may finish "your work, and put the man out of his pain." Upon another occasion, when a funeral was passing by, a person of some pleasantry said to the corpse, Go, and inform Augustus, that the legacies, which he left to the common people, have not as yet been paid. Tiberius ordered the unfortunate wit to be brought before him, and, after paying him what was computed to be his share, sent him to immediate execution, saying at the same time: "Go, and tell Augustus, that "you have received your legacy." Not a day passed without some new proof of that sullen malignity, which he pampered in solitude, and converted, at

length, into a rooted hatred of mankind. The most common occurrences irritated his passions, and discovered the rancour of his heart. In a few days after he arrived at Capreæ, as he was walking in a sequestered part of the island, a fisherman, eager to mark his respect for the emperor, made his way over rugged steeps, and pointed rocks, to present a barbel of uncommon size. Alarmed by this intrusion on his privacy, Tiberius ordered the man's face to be well rubbed with his own barbel. The astonished fisherman, as soon as he recovered from his fright, congratulated himself, that he had not brought with him a large crab, which he had taken on the coast. Tiberius called for the crab, and with the claws, and edge of the shell, cut and mangled the poor fellow's features, till he made his countenance a woful spectacle.

These, it must be acknowledged, are minute particulars, and may be thought unworthy of the historian's pen: but, when they serve to produce strokes of character, and lay open the inward temper of a man, even such materials may be allowed to merit our attention. The merciless disposition of Tiberius, and the unrelenting cruelty, with which he took away the lives of the most illustrious citizens, have been seen in a variety of tragic issues, and, perhaps, will be placed in a conspicuous light by those smaller incidents, which the diligence of other writers has collected, and which, for that reason, deserve to be here recorded. Death was considered by Tiberius as the end of human sorrow, and, consequently, as the slightest punishment that he could inflict. Whenever the unhappy prisoner wished to die, and lay down at once his load of affliction, that relief was sure to be denied: he was condemned to groan in misery. It happened that a man, of the name of Carvilius, finding himself accused of some real or pretended crime, put a period to his days. Being informed of the fact, Tiberius exclaimed, "That man has escaped from me." Upon another occasion, he thought fit to make all his prisoners pass in review before him. One of them, harassed out with pain, petitioned for a speedy execution,

"No," said Tiberius, "I have not yet made up my quarrel with you."

42. To give a minute and exact account of all his cruelties, is not the purpose of this undertaking; and yet nothing that affords an insight into the character of a deliberate and systematic tyrant, can with propriety be omitted. His band of astrologers, and the Greek philosophers, whom he retained at his court, did not meet with more kindness and humanity, than the unhappy wretches, whom he tortured in prison, and threw from rocks and precipices into the sea. He entered into conversation with Zeno, a man celebrated for his acquisitions in literature, and in all the various branches of science. The philosopher was curious in his choice of words, and spoke with a degree of elegance, that bordered on too much refinement. Surprised at some of his expressions, Tiberius asked him, which of the Greek dialects supplied him with such nice and difficult phraseology? Zeno told him, the Doric, which it seems, was the language in use at the isle of Rhodes. Tiberius was enraged at the answer: he conceived it to be a sarcastic allusion to the time of his residence in that island, and, in his rage, banished the philosopher to the isle of Cinaria.

Seleucus, the grammarian, was also invited to enjoy the sweets of meditation in the solitary retreats of Capreæ. He found that the emperor came to his evening repast, well provided with abstract questions, which he had gleaned from his morning studies. In order to be prepared for all difficulties, the philosopher made it his business to learn, from the attendants of the emperor, what authors their master chose for his amusement in the course of the day. In consequence of this intelligence, no question came upon him by surprise. Tiberius heard of the stratagem, and was fired with indignation. He thought it an attempt to pry into his actions with inquisitive eyes. The philosopher, now considered as a spy, received orders to appear no more at court, and, in a short time afterwards, was put to death.

Historians relate another transaction, which, bya

difference of opinion among themselves, they have rendered somewhat doubtful: but since they have transmitted it as a problem to exercise the judgment of posterity, it may, with propriety be inserted in this place, and left to try its fortune with the reader. A man, whose name is not mentioned, but, as it seems, an architect by profession, was employed by Tiberius, to repair an arch, that was tottering to its fall. He succeeded in the work, to the surprise of all who beheld it; and, after receiving a reward for his skill and ingenuity, was, by the jealous malignity of the emperor, sent into banishment. Addicted to the mechanic arts, and fond of useful inventions, this man found the method of manufacturing glass to a degree of perfection unknown before. Having prepared his materials, and made a vase of the most beautiful composition, he went to present it to Tiberius in the isle of Capreæ, little doubting but that, for so fine a piece of workmanship, he should obtain his pardon. Tiberius had a circle of his courtiers round him. The transparent vessel excited the admiration of all. The artist received it from the hands of the emperor, and to show the wonders of his skill, dashed it on the ground. The company was alarmed, but, in a short time, stood astonished to see, that, instead of flying into fragments, it was only bent and flattened in the part that struck against the ground. Their surprise was still more increased, when they saw the ingenious mechanic take out his hammer, and restore the glass to its original form, as if it had the flexibility of a malleable metal. Tiberius desired to know, whether he had communicated the secret of his art to any other person; and, being assured that no one knew it, he ordered him to be hurried away to instant execution, giving for his reason that a manufacture, which could transmute ordinary ingredients into so fine a form, would lessen the value of brass, and gold, and silver, and ought, for that reason, to be abolished for ever.

43. Such were the repeated acts of fell and savage cruelty, which Tiberius hoped to hide in the solitude of Capreæ. Rome, in the mean time, was a scene of slaughter, where superior talents, virtue, truth, and

innocence, perished by the stroke of lawless power. The charge of violated majesty was the signal of destruction, and a letter from Capreæ was a warrant for execution. The senate obeyed the mandate; no rule of law prevailed; justice was trampled under foot; reason and humanity were never heard; and all who did not despatch themselves, were sure to perish by the judgment of a corrupt tribunal. The islands were crowded with illustrious exiles, and the Tiber was discoloured with blood. After the death of Sejanus, the fury of the emperor rose to the highest pitch, and at Rome the people followed his example. Nothing could appease the spirit which had been roused against all, who stood in any degree connected with the unhappy favourite. Men of the first distinction, senators as well as Roman knights, were seized by the tyrant's order; some hurried to a dungeon, and others detained in the custody of the magistrates. None escaped, except such as stooped to the infamous trade of informing against others. Numbers, who had been formerly under prosecution, and, in the hour of danger, were protected by Sejanus, were now cited to appear, and executed without mercy. Neither rank, nor sex, nor age was safe. Several, to avoid, a sentence of condemnation, and to save their fortunes for their children, died by their own hands. Some had the courage to set their enemies at defiance, and with becoming magnanimity stood forth to assert their innocence, determined, since their fate was unavoidable, to preserve to the last, the honour of a fair and upright character.

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VI. In the course of these prosecutions, no less than four-and-forty speeches were made before the senate; some of them dictated by fear, and others by servile adulation, the epidemic vice of the times. Amidst the general wreck, a senator of distinguished eminence, and superior dignity of mind, finding himself doomed to destruction, called a meeting of his friends, and spoke to the following effect. "There "was a time when no human prudence could foresee, "that the friendship, which subsisted between Sejanus "and me, would either prove a reproach to him, or a "calamity to myself. A reverse of fortune has changed "the scene. And yet, even at this day, the great "person who chose Sejanus for his colleague, an "even for his son-in-law, does not condemn his own "partiality. Numbers there were, who courted the "minister in his meridian splendour, but in the mo-"ment of his decline turned against him, with trea-"chery and base ingratitude. The first was their ser-"vility; the last was their crime. Which of the two "evils is the worst, to suffer on the one hand, for a "faithful attachment, or, on the other, to blacken the "character of the man whom we have loved, I shall "not decide. The dilemma is dreadful. For myself, "I will not poorly wait to feel either the cruelty or "the compassion of any man. While I yet am free: "while I enjoy the congratulations of my own con-"science, I will act as becomes a man, and outstrip "the malice of my enemies. To you, my friends, this "is my last request: Pursue me not with tears and "vain regret: consider death as an escape from the "miseries of life; and add my name to those heroic "spirits, who chose to die with glory, rather than "survive to see the ruin of their country."

VII. After this discourse, he passed a considerable part of the day in calm serenity, receiving the visits of his friends, and taking leave of such as chose to depart. With a large circle round him, while all eyes beheld with admiration the undaunted courage, which

appeared in his countenance, and gave reason to hope that his end was not so near, he fell upon the point of his sword, which he had concealed under his mantle. Tiberius waged no war against his memory. To Blæsus, when that officer could no longer speak for himself, he behaved with inveterate rancour; but this upright citizen was allowed to rest in peace.

VIII. Publius Vitellius and Pomponius Secundus were soon after cited to appear before the senate. Vitellius had been entrusted with the care of the public treasury, and the military chest. He was charged with a design to surrender both for the service of the conspirators, with intent to overturn the government. The allegation against Pomponius, was his intimacy with Ælius Gallus, who, immediately after the execution of Sejanus, fled to the gardens of the accused, deeming that place his safest sanctuary. This charge was supported by Confidius, a man of prætorian rank. In this distress, those two eminent men had no resource but the magnanimity of their brothers, who generously stood forth, and gave security for their appearance. Vitellius, harrassed out by various delays, and at length weary of alternate hopes and fears, called for a penknife, as if going to write, and opened his veins, but with so slight a wound, that he continued to linger for some time longer. He died of a broken heart. Pomponius, who was distinguished no less by his genius, than by the gaiety and elegance of his manners, supported himself in adversity with undaunted spirit, and survived Tiberius.

IX. The fury of the populace began to subside; the blood already spilt having well nigh appeased their indignation. The fathers, however, did not relent. Two children of Sejanus, a son and a daughter, still survived the massacre of their family. They were both seized by order of the senate, and dragged to prison. The son was grown up to years of discretion; but the daughter, as yet a tender infant, was insensible of her sad condition. She was hurried through the streets, asking in a tone of simplicity, "What fault she had "committed? Whither they were leading her? Tell "her her offence, and she would be guilty of the like

"no more: they might chastise her, and she would "promise to be good." A virgin sentenced to capital punishment was, at that time, a thing unheard of at Rome: but we are told by writers of good authority, that to satisfy the forms of law, a detestable artifice was employed. The executioner deflowered her first, and strangled her afterwards. Her brother suffered at the same time. Their bodies were thrown into the *Gemoniæ*, or the common charnel, where the vilest malefactors were exposed.

X. About this time a report was spread through Greece and Asia, that Drusus, the son of Germanicus, had been seen in the islands called the Cyclades, and afterwards on the continent. A young man, it seems, about the age of Drusus, assumed the name of that unfortunate prince. The emperor's freedman encouraged the impostor, intending to favour him at first and betray him in the end. A name so celebrated as that of Drusus drew together a large conflux of the common people. The genius of the Greeks, fond of novelty and at all times addicted to the marvellous, helped to propagate the story. The prince, they said, had escaped from his confinement, and was then on his way to head the armies of Asia, formerly commanded by his father. With that force he intended to make himself master of Egypt, or of Syria. Such was the tale dressed up by the lively genius of the Greeks. What they invented, they were willing to believe. The hero of this romance had his train of followers, and the wishes of the multitude favoured his cause. The impostor, flushed with success, began to anticipate his future grandeur.

Meanwhile, Poppæus Sabinus, the proconsular governor of Macedonia and Greece, but engaged at that time in the former province, received an account of this wild attempt. He resolved to crush the adventurer without delay, and accordingly having passed the two bays of Toronis and Thermes, he crossed over to Eubœa, an island in the Ægean sea. From that place he sailed to Piræum, on the coast of Athens, and thence to Corinth and the adjoining isthmus. He there embarked on the opposite sea, and steered

his course to Nicopolis, a Roman colony, where he was informed that the impostor, when interrogated by persons of skill and judgment, declared himself the son of Marcus Silanus. After this discovery, the number of his adherents falling off, he went on board a vessel, with intent, as he himself gave out, to pass over into Italy. Sabinus sent this account to Tiberius. The affair ended here: of its origin, progress, or final issue, nothing further has reached our knowledge.

XI. Towards the close of the year, warm dissensions broke out between the two consuls. Their animosities, which had been festering for some time, were now gathered to a head. Trio was by nature restless, bold and turbulent. He had been formerly exercised in the practice of the bar, and thence more ready to provoke hostilities. He charged his colleague with too much lenity towards the accomplices of Sejanus. Regulus was a man of moderation; if not insulted, modest; if provoked, neither stupid, nor unwilling to resent an injury. Not content with refuting his adversary, he threatened to arraign him, as an accomplice in the late conspiracy. The fathers interposed their good offices to compromise the quarrel, which was likely to end in the ruin of both; but the ill will between the two consuls was not to be appeased. They continued at variance, provoking and threatening each other during the rest of the year.

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BOOK VI.

I. Cneius Domitius and Camillus Scribonianus succeeded to the consulship. They had not been long in office, when Tiberius crossed the narrow sea that divides the isle of Capreæ from Surrentum, and sailing along the coast of Campania, made his approach towards Rome, in doubt whether to enter the city; or, perhaps because he had determined otherwise, choosing to raise expectations, which he never meant to gratify. He went on shore at various places; visited his gardens on the banks of the Tiber; and at length, having amused the people with false appearances, went back to hide himself, his vices, and sensualities, amidst the rocks of Capreæ. In that place he gave a loose to his inordinate appetites, a tyrant even in his pleasures. With the pride of eastern despotism, he seized the young men of ingenuous birth, and forced them to yield to his brutal gratifications. Elegance of shape and beauty of feature were not his only incentives. The blush of modesty served as a provocative; and to stain the honour of respectable families, gave a zest to his enjoyments. New modes of sensuality were invented, and new terms for scandalous refinements in lascivious pleasure. Then, for the first time, were introduced into the Roman language, the words Sellarii and Spintriæ; two words of the vilest import, signifying at once the place of clandestine vice, and the unnatural experiments of infamous prostitution. Slaves were employed to provide objects of desire, with full commission to allure the venal with presents, and to conquer the reluctant by threats and violence. If friends interposed in the defence of youth and innocence; if a parent attempted

to protect his child, ruffian force was exercised. Compulsion and captivity followed. Like slaves by conquest, all were at the mercy of a detestable crew, whose business it was to pander for the passions of their master.

II. At Rome, in the mean time, the guilt of the younger Livia, as if she had not been sufficiently punished, was resumed with warmth and violence. The senate thundered forth decrees against her memory and her very statues. The property of Sejanus was ordered to be removed from the public treasury, to the coffers of the prince; as if, in either place, it would not have been equally at his disposal. The Scipios, the Silani, and the Cassii were the authors of this alteration. They proposed the measure, and enforced it with their best ability, but with little variance either in the language, or the argument.

Togonius Gallus had the ill-timed ambition to mix his name, however obscure and insignificant, with men of the highest rank. He made himself ridiculous; and malignity, for that reason, was willing to listen to him. He proposed that out of a number of senators, chosen by the prince, twenty should be drawn by lot, to serve under arms, as a guard to Tiberius, whenever he should choose to honour the senate with his presence. This extravagant motion sprung from the folly of a man, who was weak enough to believe that the emperor was in earnest, when he desired, by letter, that one of the consuls should be sent to guard him on his way from Capreæ to Rome. Tiberius, according to his custom, mingling a vein of irony with serious business, thanked the fathers for this mark of their care. He desired to know, "who were to be elected into the "body-guard, and who rejected? Was it to be an "office for life, or by rotation? Were they to be "draughted from the younger part of the senate, or to "consist of such as had passed through the gradations "of the magistracy? Must they be actual magistrates, "or men in a private station? And again, when the "senators, sword in hand, were drawn up rank and "file in the porch of the senate-house, what kind of "scene would that motley appearance present to the

"people? A life, which must be thus defended, was "not worth his care." In this train of raillery he replied to Togonius, adding nothing harsh, and not a word of serious tendency to overrule the motion.

III. Junius Gallio was not let off on the same easy terms. He had given his opinion that the soldiers of the prætorian band, having served the requisite time, should enjoy the privilege of sitting on the fourteen rows of the theatre, appropriated to the Roman knights. Against the mover of this innovation, Tiberius launched out with vehemence, and, though absent, with all the ardour of a personal expostulation. He asked, "what business has Gallio to interfere with "the military line? Why intermeddle with those, "whose duty it is to receive their orders, and the re- "ward of their service, from the emperor only? A "new plan of policy, unknown to the wisdom of Au- "gustus, has been broached by the superior genius of "this able statesman! Perhaps, it was the project of "a man, bred in the school of Sejanus, with a view to "kindle the flame of discord, and, under colour of dis- "pensing military honours, to seduce the affections of "the army, to the ruin of discipline and all good or- "der." Such were the wages earned by flattery. Gallio intended to pay his court, and, for his attempt, was expelled the senate, and banished out of Italy. He retired to Lesbos; but it being suggested, that, in the charming scenes of that delightful island, what was intended as a punishment, would be, in fact, a pleasing recompense, he was brought back to Rome, and ordered into close confinement in the house of a civil magistrate.

In the letter which directed this proceeding, Tiberius marked out Sextius Paconianus, of prætorian rank, as another victim. The fathers received, with pleasure, the condemnation of a man, whom they knew to be of a bold and turbulent spirit, willing to embark in any scheme of iniquity, and infamous for the pernicious talent of worming himself into the secrets of others. When Sejanus began to meditate the destruction of Caligula, he chose this man for his confidential agent. That dark conspiracy being now laid

open, every breast was fired with indignation; and if the miscreant had not prevented his fate, by offering to make important discoveries, the senate was ready to adjudge him to instant death.

IV. The person, against whom he informed, was the well-known Latinius Latiaris. The accuser and the accused were objects of public execration: and the spectacle, which they both presented, diffused a universal satisfaction. Latiaris, the reader will remember, was the chief instrument in the ruin of Sabinus. Of the several actors in that foul transaction, he was the first that paid the forfeit of his crimes. In the course of this day's debate, Haterius Agrippa attacked the consuls of the preceding year. "After mutual "accusations, why did they now remain silent? Fear, "and their own consciences, have made them com- "promise all matters in dispute. They are joined in "bonds of the strictest union. But the senate heard "their mutual accusations, and ought now to institute a "serious inquiry." Regulus replied, that in due time it was his intention to bring the business forward, but he waited for the presence of the emperor. Trio observed, that their hostilities were nothing more than the jealousy that often happens between colleagues in office; but such petty disputes ought not to be revived. This did not satisfy Agrippa. He still persisted, till Sanquinius Maximus, of consular rank, rose to allay the ferment. He entreated the fathers to be cautious how they multiplied the cares of the emperor. To be ingenious in framing new complaints, was not their province. They might rely on the wisdom of Tiberius, comprehensive as they knew it to be, and equal to the task of remedying every evil. In consequence of this conciliating speech, Regulus remained in full security, and the ruin of Trio was deferred to a further day. As to Haterius Agrippa, the violence of his conduct made him more than ever an object of the public hatred. Too indolent for a life of business, he passed his days in sleep, and his nights in riot and debauchery. His vices made him an enervated sluggard, and, at the same time, screened him from the cruelty of a jealous and unforgiving tyrant. And yet

this man, amidst the joys of wine, and in the harlot's lap, had the malevolence to plan the ruin of the most illustrious citizens.

V. Messalinus Cotta, the ready author of the most sanguinary measures, was the next person accused. This prosecution called forth a multitude of enemies. All were eager to have their full blow at a man long known and detested. The charge against him was, that, to fix on Caius Cæsar the imputation of unnatural vices, he had called the young prince by the female name of Caia, and, at a banquet given by the pontiffs, in honour of the birth-day of Livia, he called that feast a funeral entertainment. It was further alledged, that in a law-suit with Manius Lepidus, and Lucius Arruntius, he complained of the weight and influence of his adversaries, but said at the same time, "Let them boast of their interest with the senate; my "little friend Tiberius will outweigh them all." In support of this charge, the first men of Rome were willing witnesses. Cotta knew how to baffle his enemies. He removed the cause by appeal to the emperor. Tiberius in a letter to the senate, made the apology of Cotta: he stated the friendship, which had long subsisted between them, and the obligations, by which he himself was bound. He concluded with a request, that words casually spoken, and sallies of vivacity in the moments of convivial mirth, might not be converted into crimes.

VI. The letter, sent by Tiberius on this occasion, is too remarkable to be here omitted. His words were as follows: "What to write, conscript fathers; in what "terms to express myself, or what to refrain from "writing, is a matter of such perplexity, that if I know "how to decide, may the just gods, and the goddesses "of vengeance, doom me to die in pangs, worse than "those under which I linger every day." We have here the features of the inward man. His crimes retaliated upon him with the keenest retribution; so true is the saying of the great philosopher, the oracle of ancient wisdom, that if the minds of tyrants were laid open to our view, we should see them gashed and mangled with the whips and stings of horror and re-

morse. By blows and stripes the flesh is made to quiver, and in like manner, cruelty, and inordinate passions, malice and evil deeds, become internal executioners, and with unceasing torture goad and lacerate the heart. Of this truth Tiberius is a melancholy instance. Neither the imperial dignity, nor the gloom of solitude, nor the rocks of Capreæ, could shield him from himself. He lived on the rack of guilt, and his wounded spirit groaned in agony.

VII. Cæcilianus, the senator, had taken an active part in the prosecution of Messalinus Cotta. For that offence Tiberius left him to the discretion of the fathers, who thought fit to inflict the pains and penalties, which they had pronounced against Aruseius and Sanquinius, the two informers against Lucius Arruntius. The decision was honourable to Cotta; a man, it is true, of illustrious birth, but beggared by his vices, and for the profligacy of his manners universally abhorred. The redress, which he now obtained, placed him on a level with the unblemished excellence that distinguished the character of Arruntius.

Quintus Servæus and Minutius Thermus were, in the next place, both arraigned. The former was of prætorian rank, and had been the companion of Germanicus in all his expeditions; the latter was a Roman knight, who had enjoyed the friendship of Sejanus, but with reserve and moderation. Their misfortunes excited compassion. Tiberius declared against them both. He called them the principal agents in that dark conspiracy, and, for proof of the fact, desired that Cestius, a member of the senate, would give in evidence what he had written to the emperor. Cestius became their accuser.

Among the calamities of that black period, the most trying grievance was the degenerate spirit, with which the first men in the senate submitted to the drudgery of common informers; some without a blush in the face of day; and others by clandestine artifices. The contagion was epidemic. Near relations, aliens in blood, friends and strangers, known and unknown, were, without distinction, all involved in one common danger. The fact recently committed and the tale re

vived, were equally destructive. Words alone were sufficient; whether spoken in the forum, or amidst the pleasures of the table, was immaterial. Whatever the occasion or the subject, every thing was a constructive crime. Informers struggled, as it were in a race, who should be first to ruin his man; some to secure themselves; the greater part infected by the general corruption of the times.

Minutius and Servæus were both condemned, but saved themselves by giving evidence against others. They accused Julius Africanus, a native of Gaul, and Seius Quadratus, of whose origin no account remains. Of the various dangers that threatened numbers, and the execution of others, I am aware that no accurate account is to be found in the historians of the time. The writer sunk under the weight of his materials, and, feeling himself oppressed by the repetition of tragic events, was unwilling to fatigue his readers with the uniformity of blood and horror. It has happened, however, that, in the researches which I have made, several facts have come to light, untouched, it is true, by the pen of others, yet not unworthy of being recorded.

VIII. In that dangerous crisis, when the creatures of Sejanus, denying their connexions, were making from the wreck, Marcus Terentius, a Roman knight, had the spirit to avow his friendship in a speech to the following effect; "In my situation, conscript fa-"thers, I know the danger of owning myself the friend "of Sejanus; and I know that to disclaim him alto-"gether would be the best mode of defence. Be that "as it may, I am willing to declare my sentiments. I "was the friend of that minister; I sought his patron-"age, and I gloried in it. I saw him associated with "his father in the command of the prætorian bands: "I saw him afterwards, not only at the head of the "military department, but invested with the whole "civil authority. His friends and relations rose to "honours: and to be in his good graces, was a sure "road to the favour of the prince. On the other hand, "all, on whom the minister frowned, were either

"crushed by the weight of power, or left to languish "in obscurity. I forbear to mention names. Speaking "in my own defence, I plead the cause of all who, "like myself, were connected with the favourite, and "like myself, were unconscious of his last designs."

"In paying court to Sejanus, it was not the Vulsi- "nian citizen whom we endeavoured to conciliate; it "was a branch of the Claudian and the Julian families; "it was the son-in-law of Cæsar; it was his colleague "in the consulship; it was his vicegerent in the ad- "ministration, to whom our homage was offered. Is it "the pleasure of the emperor to raise a favourite "above his fellow citizens? It is not for us to esti- "mate the merit of the man, nor ours to weigh the "motives that determined the choice. The supreme "power is in the hands of the prince; committed to "him by the gods: and submission is the virtue of "every citizen. Of the mysteries of state we see no "more than what he is willing to reveal; we see who "is raised to dignities, and who has power to distri- "bute the rewards and the terrors of government. "That the rays of majesty were collected, and fell on "Sejanus, no man will deny, The sentiments of the "prince are to us impenetrable. The secret springs "of action it is not in our power to discover; the at- "tempt were dangerous, and may deceive the ablest "statesman.

"When I speak of Sejanus, conscript fathers, I do "not speak of the minister, fallen from the height of "power, undone and ruined. I speak of Sejanus six- "teen years in the meridian of his glory. During that "time, a Satrius Secundus and a Pomponius com- "manded our respect. And if his freedman, or the "porter at his gate, condescended to be gracious, we "considered it as the highest honour. But to come to "the point; Shall this be the defence of all who follow- "ed the fortunes of Sejanus? By no means, conscript "fathers; draw the line yourselves; let the enemies "of the commonwealth, and the conspirators against "the prince, be delivered up to public justice: but let "the offices of friendship remain inviolate: and let

"the principle, which justifies the choice of the prince, "be at least an apology for the subject."

IX. The firmness of this speech, and the spirit of the man, who could boldly utter what others only dared to think, made such an impression, that the prosecutors, for their former crimes added to their present malignity, were either driven into banishment, or condemned to death. Tiberius soon after sent an accusation against Sextus Vestilius, of prætorian rank, and formerly high in favour with Drusus, the emperor's brother. Tiberius, for that reason, had received him with open arms, and ranked him in the number of his intimate friends. The crime now laid to his charge was a satirical piece against Caligula, for which Vestilius, the real, or the supposed author, was excluded from the emperor's table. In despair, he opened a vein, but with the trembling hand of age. The wound was slight, and he tied it up again, in order to try the effect of a petition. Having received an obdurate answer, he once more made use of his weapon, and bled to death.

The next prosecution was intended to make a sweep of a great number at once. Annius Polio, Appius Silanus, Mamercus Scarus, and Sabinus Calvisius, were grouped together on a charge of violated majesty. Vinicianus was added to his father Pollio. They were all men of the first rank, and some of them invested with the highest civil honours. The senate was struck with terror. Few in that assembly stood detached, either in point of friendship or alliance, from the persons accused. It happened that the evidence of Celsus, a tribune of the city cohorts, and one of the prosecutors, acquitted Appius Silanus and Calvisius. The trial of Pollio, Vinicianus, and Scaurus, was put off, by order of Tiberius, till he himself should think proper to attend in person. In the mean time, some pointed expressions in his letter plainly showed that Scaurus was the chief object of his resentment.

X. Not even the softer sex could find a shelter from the calamity of the times. Women, it is true, could not be charged with designs to overturn the government; but natural affection was made a crime, and

the parental tear was treason. Vitia, the mother of Fusius Geminus, wept for her son, and for that offence, in an advanced age, she was put to death. Such were the horrible proceedings of the senate. Tiberius in his island was no less vindictive. By his order, Vescularius Flaccus and Julius Marinus, his two earliest friends, who had followed him to the Isle of Rhodes, and still adhered to him in the Isle of Capreæ, were hurried to execution. In the ruin of Libo, the first had been the active agent of the emperor; and in the plot, by which Sejanus wrought the downfal of Curtius Atticus, Marinus was the principal actor. The public saw, with pleasure, that the authors of destruction perished by their own pernicious arts.

About this time Lucius Piso, the præfect of Rome, paid his debt to nature. He had lived his days with honour, and, what was rare in that black period, though high in rank and authority, he died by mere decay. A man of principle, and never, of his own motion, the author of harsh or violent measures; he was able frequently to prevent or mitigate destructive counsels. Piso, the censor, as already mentioned, was his father. The son lived to the age of fourscore. By his service in the wars of Thrace he obtained triumphal ornaments; but his truest triumph, the glory of his character, arose from the wisdom with which he acted as governor of Rome, tempering with wonderful address, the rigour of an office, odious on account of its novelty, and rendered, by its duration, a galling yoke to the people.

XI. The origin of this institution may be traced in the early ages of Rome. While the monarchy continued, and afterwards under the consular government, that the city might not be left, during the absence of the king or consuls, in a state of anarchy, a civil magistrate was invested with the whole executive authority. By Romulus, we are told, Romulius Denter was appointed; Numa Marcius, by Tullus Hostilius; and Spurius Lucretius, by Tarquin the Proud. That precedent was followed by the consuls; and, even at this day, we find an image of the custom in the temporary magistrate, who, during the Latin festivals,

discharges the functions of the consul. In the time of the civil wars Augustus delegated the supreme authority, both at Rome and throughout Italy, to Cilnius Mæcenas, a Roman knight. When the success of his arms made him master of the empire, finding an unwieldly government on his hands, and a slow and feeble remedy from the laws, he chose a person of consular rank, to restrain, by speedy justice, the slaves within due bounds, and to control the licentious spirit of the citizens, ever turbulent, and, if not overawed, prone to innovation. The first that rose to this important post was Messala Corvinus, who found himself unequal to the task, and resigned in a few days. Taurus Statilius succeeded, and notwithstanding his advanced age, acquitted himself with honour and ability. Lucius Piso was the next in office. During a series of twenty years, he discharged the duties of that difficult station with such an even tenor, and such constant dignity, that, by a decree of the senate, he was honoured with a public funeral.

XII. A report relating to a book of the Sybils was presented to the senate by Quinctilianus, a tribune of the people. Caninius Gallus, who was of the college of fifteen, considered this book as the undoubted composition of the Cumæan prophetess; and, as such, desired that, by a decree, it might be enrolled in the proper archives. The question was put, and carried without any opposition. Tiberius, by letter, condemned the whole proceeding. The youth of Quinctilianus, he admitted, might be an apology for his ignorance of ancient customs; but he observed, and not without asperity, that it ill became a man like Gallus, versed in the science of laws and religious ceremonies, to adopt the performance of an uncertain author, without having first obtained the sanction of the quindecimviral college, and without so much as reading it, as had been the practice, at a meeting of the pontiffs. Besides this, the vote was passed by surprise in a thin meeting of the senate. He added further, that since the world abounded with spurious productions, falsely ascribed to the venerable name of the ancient Sybil,

it had been the wisdom of Augustus to fix a stated day, on or before which all papers of the kind were to be deposited with the prætors, and none, after the limited time, to remain in private hands. For this regulation there was an ancient precedent. After the social war, when the Capitol was destroyed by fire, diligent search was made at Samos, at Ilium, at Erythræ, in Africa, Sicily, and all the Roman colonies, in order to collect the Sybilline verses, whether the production of a single prophetess or of a greater number; and the sacerdotal order had directions, as far as human sagacity could distinguish, to separate the fictitious from the genuine composition. In consequence of this letter, the book in question was referred to the college of fifteen, called the QUINDECIMVIRI.

XIII. During the same consulship, the distress, occasioned by a dearth of corn, well nigh excited a popular insurrection. For several days the clamour in the theatre was outrageous beyond all former example. Tiberius wrote to the senate, and, in terms of keen reproach, censured the inactivity of the magistrates, who suffered the mutinous spirit of the populace to rage without control; he stated the quantity of grain imported annually by his orders, and the provinces from which he drew his supplies, far exceeding the importation formerly made by Augustus. To restore the public tranquillity, the senate passed a decree in the style and spirit of the old republic. The consuls followed it with an edict of equal rigour. The emperor took no part in the business; but his silence gained him no popularity: he flattered himself with hopes that it would pass for the moderation of a republican prince; but it was deemed the sullen pride of a tyrant.

XIV. Towards the end of the year, three Roman knights, by name, Geminius, Celsus, and Pompeius, were charged with a conspiracy, and condemned to suffer. Geminius had been a man of pleasure, and great prodigality. His taste for expense and luxury recommended him to the friendship of Sejanus, but a friendship merely convivial, leading to no serious connexion. Junius Celsus, at that time one of the tri-

bunes, as he lay fettered in prison, contrived to lengthen out his chain, so as to wind it round his neck and strangle himself.

About the same time, Rubrius Fabatus, who had fled from the city, with intent to seek among the Parthians a refuge from the disasters of the time, was apprehended by a centurion, near the straits of Sicily, and brought back to Rome. Being questioned, he was not able, with any colour of probability, to account for his sudden departure on so long a journey. He escaped, however, though not by an act of clemency. He continued to live in safety, not pardoned but forgotten.

XV. Servius Galba and Lucius Sylla were the next consuls. Tiberius saw his granddaughters in the season of life, that made it proper to dispose of them in marriage. On that subject he had deliberated for some time. His choice, at length, fixed on Lucius Cassius and Marcus Vinicius. Vinicius was born at a small municipal town, known by the name of CALES. His father and grandfather were of consular rank: but the family, before their time, never rose higher than the equestrian order. Their descendant united to his amiable manners a vein of pleasing eloquence. Cassius was born at Rome, of a plebeian, but respected family. He was educated under the strict tuition of his father, but succeeded more through happiness than care and industry. To these two the daughters of Germanicus were given in marriage; Drusilla to Cassius, and Julia to Vinicius. Tiberius in his letters to the senate made honourable mention of the young men, but in a style of reserve. He touched on his long absence from the capital, and, after glossing it over with vague and frivolous reasons, talked in a more serious tone of the weight of government, and the animosities which he was obliged to encounter. He desired that Macro, præfect of the prætorian guards, with a small number of tribunes and centurions, might have directions to guard his person as often as he should attend the senate. A decree was passed in the amplest form, according to his desire, without limitation of rank or number. Tiberius, notwithstanding

never appeared in the assembly of the fathers, nor even entered the walls of Rome. He made feigned approaches, still retreating through devious roads, suspecting the people, and flying from his country.

XVI. The practice of usury was a grievance that distressed the whole community. Against such as sought to increase their wealth by placing out money at exorbitant interest, actions were commenced. The money-lenders were accused under a law enacted by Julius Cæsar, whereby the terms of lending on land-security, throughout Italy, were defined and settled; a wise and salutary law, but fallen into disuse, the public good, as is too often the case, giving way to private advantage. Usury, it must be admitted, was an early canker of the commonwealth, the frequent cause of tumult and sedition. Laws were made to repress the mischief, while yet the manners were pure and uncorrupted. In the first ages of the commonwealth, interest of money was arbitrary, depending on the will and pleasure of the opulent; but, by a law of the twelve tables, it was reduced to one for the hundred. More was declared illegal. In process of time a new regulation, proposed by the tribunes, lowered it to one half; and, finally, it was abolished altogether. It began, however, to revive, and, to suppress its growth, new sanctions were established by the authority of the people: but fraud found new expedients, often checked, and as often re-appearing in different shapes. In the reign of Tiberius, at the point of time now in question, the complaint was brought before Gracchus the prætor, who was empowered, by virtue of his office, to hear and determine. That magistrate, however, seeing numbers involved in the question, submitted the whole to the consideration of the senate. In that order few were exempt from the general vice. Alarmed for themselves, and wishing to obtain a general immunity, the fathers referred the business to the emperor. Tiberius complied with their request. A year and six months were granted, that men in that time might adjust and settle their accounts, according to law.

XVII. The want of current money brought on a

new scene of distress. Creditors pressed to have their accounts balanced, and judgment was signed against such as stood indebted. Their effects were sold, and all the specie was either carried to the public treasury, or swallowed up in the coffers of the prince. To alleviate this inconvenience, the senate ordered, by a decree, that two thirds of each man's debt should be secured on lands in Italy. But still the creditors claimed the whole of their demand, and the debtor, by consequence, was reduced to the brink of ruin. He wished to save his honour; the necessity pressed; meetings were held, supplications were tried, but the law took its course. The tribunal of the prætor resounded with complaints, and noise and lamentations. The project of obliging the debtor to sell his lands, and the creditors to purchase, instead of healing the mischief, made it worse. The usurers lay in wait to buy at a reduced price, and for that purpose hoarded up their money. The value of lands sunk in proportion to the number of estates on sale, and the debtor was left without resource. Whole families were ruined; their credit was destroyed, and every prospect vanished. Tiberius interposed with seasonable relief. He opened a fund of one hundred thousand great sesterces, as a public loan, for three years free from interest, on condition that the borrower, for the security of the state, should mortgage lands of double the value. By this salutary aid, public credit was revived. The money which had lain in private hands, began to circulate; and the order of the senate, directing the sale of land-property, fell into disuse. Like most plans of reformation, it was embraced at first with ardour; but the novelty ceased, and the scheme ended in nothing.

XVIII. The rage of prosecutions, from which Rome had an interval of rest, broke out again with collected fury. The first that suffered was Confidius Proculus, on a charge of violated majesty. On his birth-day, while he was celebrating that annual festival, he was seized, in the moment of joy, and conducted to the senate-house, where he was tried, condemned, and hurried away to execution. His sister, Sancia, was interdicted from fire and water. The prosecutor, who

appeared against her, was Quintus Pomponius, a fierce and turbulent spirit. To curry favour with the prince, and thereby save his brother, Pomponius Secundus, was the pretence with which this man endeavoured to palliate his iniquity. The senate proceeded next against Pompeia Macrina. She was condemned to banishment. Her husband, Argolicus, and Laco, her father-in-law, both of distinguished rank in Achaia, had, before this time, fallen victims to the cruelty of Tiberius. Macrina's father, an illustrious Roman knight, and her brother, who was of prætorian rank, to avoid a similar sentence, put an end to their lives. The crime alleged against them was, that their ancestor, Theophanes, of Mitylene, had been the confidential friend of Pompey the Great; and that divine honours were paid to the memory of Theophanes by the flattering genius of the Greek nation.

XIX. Sextus Marius, who held the largest possessions in Spain, was the next victim. Incest with his own daughter was the imputed crime; he was precipitated down the Tarpeian rock. That the avarice of Tiberius was the motive of this act of violence, was seen beyond the possibility of a doubt, when the gold-mines of the unfortunate Spaniard, which were forfeited to the public, were known to be seized by the emperor for his own use. He was now so far plunged in blood, that executions served only to whet his cruelty. At one blow, he ordered all, who were detained in prison for their supposed connexion with Sejanus, to be put to instant death. A dreadful carnage followed: neither sex nor age was spared; the noble and ignoble perished without distinction; dead bodies in mangled heaps, or scattered up and down, presented a tragic spectacle. Neither friend, nor relation, dared to approach; none were permitted to soothe the pangs of death, to weep over the deceased, or to bid the last farewell. Guards were stationed to watch the looks of afflicted friends, and to catch intelligence from their tears, till, at length, the putrid bodies were thrown into the Tiber, to drive at the mercy of the winds and waves. Some were carried away by the current; others were thrown on shore, but to burn or

bury them was allowed to no man. All were struck with terror, and the last office of humanity was suppressed. Cruelty went on increasing, and every sentiment of the heart was smothered in silence.

XX. About this time, Caligula, who paid close attendance on his grandfather in the Isle of Capreæ, was married to Claudia, the daughter of Marcus Silanus. This young prince had the art to conceal, under a veil of modesty, the most detestable of human characters. Neither the condemnation of his mother, nor the banishment of his brother, could extort from him one word of compassion. He studied the humours of Tiberius; he watched the whim of the day, and set his features accordingly, in dress and language the mimic of his grandfather. Hence the shrewd remark of Passienus, the famous orator: "There never was "a better slave, nor a more detestable master." A prophetic expression, that fell from Tiberius, concerning Galba, who was this year in the office of consul, may not unaptly be inserted in this place. Having called him to an audience, in order to penetrate his inmost thoughts, he tried him on various topics, and, at length, told him in Greek, "You too, Galba, at a "future day, will have a taste of sovereign power;" alluding to his elevation late in life, and the shortness of his reign. To look into the seeds of time was the early study of Tiberius. In the Isle of Rhodes, judicial astrology was his favourite pursuit. In the acquisition of that science, he there employed his leisure, under Thrasullus, whose abilities he tried in the following manner:

XXI. Whenever he chose to consult an astrologer, he retired with him to the top of the house, attended by a single freedman, selected for the purpose, illiterate, but of great bodily strength. This man conducted the soothsayer, whose talents were to be tried, along the ridge of the cliff, on which the mansion stood; and as he returned, if the emperor suspected fraud, or vain affectation of knowledge, he threw the impostor headlong into the sea. Tiberius was, by these means, left at ease, and no witness survived to tell the story. Thrasullus was put to the same test.

Being led along the precipice, he answered a number of questions; and not only promised imperial splendour to Tiberius, but opened a scene of future events, in a manner that filled his imagination with astonishment. Tiberius desired to know, "whether he had "cast his own nativity? Could he foresee what was "to happen in the course of the year? nay, on that "very day?" Thrasullus consulted the position of the heavens, and the aspect of the planets: he was struck with fear; he paused; he hesitated; he sunk into profound meditation; terror and amazement shook his frame. Breaking silence at last, "I per-"ceive," he said, "the crisis of my fate; this very "moment may be my last." Tiberius clasped him in his arms, congratulating him both on his knowledge, and his escape from danger. From that moment he considered the predictions of Thrasullus as the oracles of truth, and the astrologer was ranked in the number of the prince's confidential friends.

XXII. When I reflect on this fact, and others of a similar nature, I find my judgment so much on the balance, that, whether human affairs are governed by fate and immutable necessity, or left to the wild rotatation of chance, I am not able to decide. Among the philosophers of antiquity, and the followers of their different sects among the moderns, two opposite opinions have prevailed. According to the system of one party, "in all that relates to man, his formation, "his progress, and his end, the gods have no concern; "and, by consequence, calamity is often the good "man's portion, while vice enjoys the pleasures and "advantages of the world." In opposition to this hypothesis, another school maintains, "that the immuta-"ble law of fate is perfectly consistent with the events "of the moral world; that law, they tell us, does not "depend on the course of wandering planets, but is "fixed in the first principles of things, supported and "preserved by a chain of natural causes. Man, not-"withstanding, is left at liberty to choose his sphere "of action; but the choice once made, the conse-"quences follow in their regular course, fixed, certain, "and inevitable." By this sect we are further taught,

"that good and evil are not always what vulgar error "has so defined; on the contrary, many, whom we see "struggling with adversity, are yet perfectly happy; "while others, in all the pride and affluence of for- "tune, are truly wretched. The former, by their for- "titude, tower above the ills of life; and the latter, by "their indiscretion, poison their own felicity."

Sublime as this theory may be, there is still a third opinion, which has taken root in the human mind, and can not be eradicated. According to this doctrine, the colour of our lives is fixed in the first moment of our existence: and, though what is foretold, and the events that follow, may often vary, the fallacy is not to be imputed to the art itself, but to the vanity of pretenders to a science, respected by antiquity, and in modern times established by undoubted proof. In fact, the reign of Nero was foretold by the son of this very Thrasullus: but this, to avoid a long digression, shall be reserved for its proper place.

XXIII. During the same consulship, the death of Asinius Gallus became publicly known. That he died by famine, no man doubted; but whether through compulsion, or wilful abstinence, is uncertain. Application was made for leave to perform his funeral obsequies; nor did Tiberius blush to grant as a favour, what was the common right of man. He regretted, however, that a criminal, before he could be convicted in his presence, had escaped the hand of justice; as if in three years, since the charge was laid, there was not sufficient time to proceed against a man of consular rank, and the father of consuls.

The death of Drusus followed. By order of Tiberius he was to be starved to death. By chewing the weeds that served for his bed, the unhappy prince lingered nine days in misery. At the time when Macro received his orders to act with vigour against Sejanus, Tiberius, as some writers assert, gave directions, if that desperate minister had recourse to arms, that Drusus, then confined in the palace, should be produced to the people, and proclaimed emperor. In consequence of this report, an opinion prevailed, that the prince was on the point of being reconciled to his

grandson and his daughter-in-law. But to relent, was not in the temper of Tiberius: he was supposed to be mercifully inclined, and he chose rather to display his cruelty.

XXIV. The death of Drusus was not sufficient to satisfy the vengeance of Tiberius. He persecuted the memory of the prince with unextinguished hatred; he imputed to him unnatural passions, and represented him as a person who had not only lost all family affection, but, being possessed of an aspiring genius, was actually employed in concerting measures to overturn the government. He ordered a day-book to be read before the fathers, in which the words and actions of Drusus were carefully recorded. In the annals of history is there any thing to match this black, this horrible inquisition? For a length of time, spies of state were appointed to keep a register of words, to interpret looks, and note the groans that issued from the heart. That the grandfather could countenance a plot so black and detestable; that he could listen to the whispered tale; read a clandestine journal, and not only read it in secret, but produce it in the face of day, appears too atrocious to be believed, if the fact were not authenticated by the letters of Actius the centurion, and Didymus the freedman. In the narrative left by those men, we find the names of the slaves employed about the prince's person. One struck him, as he came forth from his chamber; another overpowered him with terror and dismay.

The centurion, as if brutality were a merit, boasts of his savage expressions. He relates the words of the prince, in the last ebb of life, spoken against Tiberius, at first, perhaps, in a feigned delirium, but when his end drew near, in a tone of solemn imprecation, imploring the gods, that he, who imbrued his hands in the blood of his daughter-in-law; who murdered his nephew; who destroyed his grandchildren, and in his own family laid a scene of slaughter, might not escape the punishment due to his crimes. "Reserve him," he said, "reserve him, gods! for your own just vengeance: let him fall a terrible example to the present age, and to all posterity." The fathers, affect-

ing to shudder at imprecations so eager and emphatic, interrupted the reading; but they felt the impression at their hearts. With horror and astonishment they beheld a tyrant, who with close hypocrisy, had hitherto concealed his crimes, but was now so hardened, that without shame or remorse, he could throw open prison-walls, and show his grandson under the centurion's lash, exposed to common ruffians, and, in the agony of famine, begging a wretched pittance to support expiring nature, but begging it in vain.

XXV. The grief occasioned by the melancholy death of Drusus had not subsided, when the public received another shock from the tragic end of Agrippina. The fall of Sejanus afforded a gleam of hope, which, it may be conjectured, helped to support her spirits for some time: but when she saw no alteration of measures, worn out and tired of life, she resolved to close the scene. Her death was said to be voluntary; but if it be true, that all nourishment was withheld from her, it is evident that an artful tale was fabricated, to give the appearance of suicide to a cruel and barbarous murder. Even after her decease, Tiberius continued still implacable. He loaded her memory with the foulest imputations; he charged her with incontinence; he pronounced Asinius Gallus her adulterer; and when she lost her paramour, life, he said, was no longer worth her care. But the character of Agrippina was invulnerable. It is true, that a mind like hers could not brook an equal. Ambition was her ruling passion; and in her views of grandeur the soft desires of her sex were lost. Tiberius added, as a circumstance worthy of being recorded, that she died on the anniversary of the day that freed the world from Sejanus two years before. That she was not strangled and thrown into the common charnel-house, he thought fit to celebrate as an act of clemency. The senate thanked him for that tender indulgence, and ordained, by a decree, that the fifteenth before the calends of November (the day on which Sejanus and Agrippina both expired) should be observed as a solemn festival, with annual offerings on the altar of Jupiter.

XXVI. Soon after these transactions, Cocceius Nerva, the constant companion of the prince, a man distinguished by his knowledge of laws, both human and divine, possessing a splendid fortune, and still in the vigour of health, grew weary of life, and formed a resolution to lay the burden down. Tiberius, on the first intelligence, paid him a visit; he entered into close conversation; he desired to know his motives; he expostulated, tried the force of entreaty, and declared, without reserve, that if a man so high in favour, without any apparent reason, put an end to his life, it would be a stab to the emperor's peace of mind, and a stain indelible to his reputation. Nerva declined the subject. He persisted in wilful abstinence, and shortly after closed his days. From those who best knew his character and way of thinking, we learn the reasons of his conduct. He saw the cloud that was ready to burst on the commonwealth, and struck, at once, with fear and indignation, he resolved, while yet his honour was unblemished, to escape with glory from the horrors of the time.

Extraordinary as it may seem, the death of Agrippina drew after it the ruin of Plancina. She was formerly the wife of Cneius Piso. The reader will remember the savage joy with which she heard of the death of Germanicus. When her husband perished, the influence of Livia, and, still more, the enmity of Agrippina, screened her from the punishment due to her crimes. But court-favour and private animosity were at an end, and justice took its course. The charge against her was founded on facts of public notoriety. In despair she laid violent hands on herself, and suffered, at last, the slow, but just reward of a flagitious life.

XXVII. Amidst the tragic events that covered the city of Rome with one general face of mourning, a new cause of discontent arose from the marriage of Julia (the daughter of Drusus, and lately the wife of Nero) with Rubellius Blandus, whose grandfather, a native of Tibur, and never of higher distinction than the equestrian rank, was fresh in the memory of men still living. Towards the end of the year, the

funeral of Ælius Lamia was celebrated with all the honours of the censorian order. He had been for some time the nominal governor of Syria, and having resigned that imaginary title, was made prætect of Rome. Illustrious by his birth, he lived to a vigorous old age; and not being suffered to proceed to the province of Syria, he derived from that very restraint additional dignity.

The death of Pomponius Flaccus proprætor of Syria, which happened soon after the decease of Lamia, produced a letter from Tiberius to the senate, remonstrating that officers of rank, who by their talents were fit to be at the head of armies, declined the service; and, by consequence, the emperor was reduced to the necessity of requesting, that the fathers would use their influence, to induce men of consular rank to undertake the office. He forgot, however, that ten years before, Arruntius was appointed to the government of Spain, but during that whole time, never permitted to leave the city.

In the course of this year died Manius Lepidus, whose wisdom and moderation have been already mentioned. To say any thing of the nobility of his birth were superfluous, since it is well known, that the house of the Æmilii, from whom he derived his pedigree, produced a race of eminent citizens. If any of the family degenerated from the virtue of their ancestors, they continued, notwithstanding, to support the splendour of an ancient and illustrious race.

XXVIII. Paulus Fabius and Lucius Vitellius succeeded to the consulship. In the course of the year, the miraculous bird, known to the world by the name of the phœnix, after disappearing for a series of ages, revisited Egypt. A phænomenon so very extraordinary, could not fail to produce abundance of curious speculation. The learning of Egypt was displayed, and Greece exhausted her ingenuity. The facts about which there seems to be a concurrence of opinions, with other circumstances, in their nature doubtful, yet worthy of notice, will not be unwelcome to the reader.

That the phœnix is sacred to the sun, and differs from the rest of the feathered species, in the form of

its head, and the tincture of its plumage, are points settled by the naturalists. Of its longevity, the accounts are various. The common persuasion is, that it lives five hundred years, though by some writers the date is extended to fourteen hundred and sixty-one. The several æras, when the phœnix has been seen, are fixed by tradition. The first, we are told, was in the reign of Sesostris; the second, in that of Amasis; and in the period when Ptolemy, the third of the Macedonian race, was seated on the throne of Egypt, another phœnix directed its flight towards Heliopolis, attended by a groupe of various birds, all attracted by the novelty, and gazing with wonder at so beautiful an appearance. For the truth of this account, we do not presume to answer. The facts lie too remote, and, covered as they are with the mist of antiquity, all further argument is suspended.

From the reign of Ptolemy to Tiberius, the intermediate space is not quite two hundred and fifty years. From that circumstance it has been inferred by many that the last phœnix was neither of the genuine kind, nor came from the woods of Arabia.

The instinctive qualities of the species were not observed to direct its motions. It is the genius, we are told, of the true phœnix, when its course of years is finished, and the approach of death is felt, to build a nest in its native clime, and there deposit the principles of life, from which a new progeny arises. The first care of the young bird, as soon as fledged, and able to trust to its wings, is to perform the obsequies of his father. But this duty is not undertaken rashly. He collects a quantity of myrrh, and, to try his strength, makes frequent excursions, with a load on his back. When he has made his experiment through a long tract of air, and gains sufficient confidence in his own vigour, he takes up the body of his father, an flies with it to the altar of the sun, where he leaves it to be consumed in flames of fragrance. Such is the account of this extraordinary bird. It has, no doubt, a mixture of fable; but that the phœnix, from time to time, appears in Egypt, seems to be a fact sufficiently ascertained.

XXIX. Rome continued to stream with the blood of eminent citizens. Pomponius Labeo, who had been, as already mentioned, governor of Mysia, opened his veins and bled to death. His wife Paxæa had the spirit to follow his example. Suicide was the only refuge from the hand of the executioner. Those who waited for the sentence of the law incurred a forfeiture, and were, besides, deprived of the rites of sepulture; while to such as died by their own hand, funeral ceremonies were allowed, and their wills were valid. Such was the reward of despatch! Self-destruction was made the interest of mankind. On the subject of Labeo's death, Tiberius wrote to the senate. He observed, "that in ancient times, when all ties of friend-"ship were to be dissolved, it was the custom to give "notice to the discarded party, that his visits were no "longer agreeable. In that manner he had acted "with Labeo: all connexion was at an end. But that "unhappy man, finding himself charged with the ini-"quity of his government, and pressed by the weight "of other crimes, made a show of injured innocence, "with intent to throw the odium of his death on the "emperor. The example was fatal to his wife. She "took the alarm and perished with her husband. "She might have quelled her fears; for, though her "guilt was manifest, she might have lived in safety."

A new prosecution was commenced against Mamercus Scaurus, a distinguished senator, famous as well for his eloquence as the nobility of his birth, but a libertine in his conduct. He had been connected with Sejanus, but on that account no danger threatened him. The enmity of Macro, who practised the wiles of Sejanus, but with deeper policy, was the cause of his ruin. A tragedy, written by Scaurus, was the ground of the charge. Some lines were cited from the piece, and, by a strained construction, said to point obliquely at Tiberius. But to make sure work, Servilius and Cornelius, two informers by profession, accused him with adultery with the younger Livia, and of secret practices in the magic art. Scaurus, with a spirit worthy of the ancient Æmilii, from whom he was descended, resolved not to linger for a public sen-

tence. His wife Sexitia exhorted him to an act of bravery, and died herself with the courage which she recommended.

XXX. Amidst these acts of violence, the informers, in their turn, were abandoned to their fate. Servilius and Cornelius, who, by their conduct to Scaurus, had brought on themselves the public detestation, were charged with taking a bribe to compound a prosecution commenced by themselves against Varius Ligur.- They were both interdicted from fire and water, and transported to the islands. A similar fate attended Abudius Rufo. This man had discharged the office of ædile, and also served, at the head of a legion, under Lentulus Gætulicus. He turned informer against his commanding officer, alleging that he had projected a match between his daughter and one of the sons of Sejanus. He construed this into a crime, and for the attempt was banished from Rome. At the time when this prosecution was set on foot, Gætulicus commanded the legions in Upper Germany. Distinguished by his clemency, and without rigour maintaining military discipline, he was the idol of the soldiers. By his interest with his father-in-law, Lucius Apronius, he was also high in credit with the other army, which was stationed at a small distance. In this situation, it is said, not without probability, that he had the courage to despatch a letter to Tiberius, to the following effect: "The proposed alliance with Sejanus did not "originate with himself: the emperor had recom- "mended it. The meanest citizen is liable to error, "no less than the prince. To mistake with impunity "can not be the prerogative of the emperor, and, at "the same time, a crime in others. For himself, his "fidelity remained inviolate, and, if no snare was laid "for his ruin, nothing could shake his principles. "Should a successor be sent to supersede him in the "command, he should understand it as the prologue "to a sentence of condemnation. But there were con- "ditions, on which something like a treaty between "both parties might be settled: he desired to remain "unmolested in the government of the province, and "Tiberius might give the law to the rest of the Ro-

"man world." Incredible as this anecdote may appear, it gains an air of authenticity, when it is considered, that, of all the favourites of Sejanus, Gætulicus was the only person who had the secret to preserve his life, and live in the good graces of the prince. The truth is, Tiberius knew that he had incurred the public hatred. Worn out with age and infirmities, he was wise enough to reflect, that fame and the opinion of mankind, rather than the exercise of power, must for the future be the pillars of his government.

XXXI. In the consulship of Caius Cestius and Marcus Servilius, a deputation from the Parthian nobility, without the concurrence or privity of Artabanus, their king, arrived at Rome. While the arms of Germanicus filled the east with terror, that monarch continued to adhere with good faith to the Romans, and to rule his own dominions with equity and moderation. He broke out afterwards with open violence; to Rome, proud and arrogant; to his people, fierce and unrelenting. The prosperous events of war with the neighbouring nations inspired him with the pride and insolence of victory. He saw Tiberius, in the decline of life, a feeble prince, disarmed and powerless. Armenia was the object of his ambition. Artaxias, king of the country, was no sooner dead, than he placed his eldest son, Arsaces, on the vacant throne. His arrogance did not stop there. By his ambassadors he demanded, in haughty and imperious terms, immediate restitution of the treasures left by Vonones in Syria and Cilicia. He laid claim, besides, to all the territories, formerly belonging to the Persians and Macedonians. He added, in a style of vainglory, that whatever was possessed by Cyrus, and afterwards by Alexander, was his undoubted right, and he was determined to recover the same by force of arms.

The Parthians, in the mean time, by the advice of Sinnaces, a man of great opulence and noble birth, sent their secret embassy to Rome. The measure was supported by Abdus, the eunuch. In the eastern nations the loss of manhood is no degradation: on the contrary, it leads to power and preferment. With those two leading chiefs the grandees of Parthia en-

tered into a conspiracy. But still to wear the regal diadem, one only of the race of the Arsacides could be found. The greatest part of that family was cut off by Artabanus, and the survivors were too young to govern. The Parthians, therefore, desired that Tiberius would send Phraates, son of the king of that name, to mount the throne of his ancestors. That title and the sanction of Rome would be sufficient. Let a prince of the house of Arsaces, under the protection of Tiberius, show himself on the banks of the Euphrates, and nothing more was necessary: a revolution would be the certain consequence.

XXXII. The enterprise was agreeable to the wishes of Tiberius. He despatched Phraates, enriched with presents, and every mark of splendour suitable to the royal dignity. But still it was his fixed plan not to depart from his former resolution to work by stratagem, and, if possible, to avoid a war. The secret transpired at the Parthian court. Artabanus was thrown into a state of violent perplexity. Revenge and fear took possession of him by turns. In the idea of an eastern monarch, indecision is the mark of a servile mind. Vigour and sudden enterprise are attributes of the royal character. In the present juncture, those notions gave way, and his interest conquered prejudices. He invited Abdus to a banquet, and, by a slow poison, rendered him unfit for action. With Sinnaces he thought it best to dissemble. He loaded him with presents, and, by employing him in state affairs, left him no leisure for clandestine machinations. Meanwhile Phraates arrived in Syria. Willing to conform to the customs of the East, he threw off the dress and manners of the Romans. The transition, however, was too violent; and his constitution proving unequal to so sudden a change, he was carried off by a fit of illness. Tiberius was unwilling to relinquish a measure which he had once approved. He named Tiridates, descended from the same stock with Phraates, as a fit rival to contend with Artabanus.

In order to recover the kingdom of Armenia, he entered into an alliance with Mithridates, a prince of the Iberian line, having beforehand contrived to recon-

cile him to his brother Pharasmanes, then the reigning monarch of Iberia. An important scene was now opening in the East. To conduct the whole, Tiberius gave the command to Lucius Vitellius. The character of this officer is well known. He showed himself in his true colours to the people of Rome, insomuch that his memory is still held in detestation. In the East, however, his conduct was irreproachable. He acted in the province with the integrity of an ancient Roman. After his return he renounced that character altogether, a ready apostate from every virtue. His dread of Caligula, and his intimacy with Claudius, transformed him into an abject slave. He is now remembered as a model of the vilest adulation. What was praiseworthy in the beginning of his days, changed to infamy in his riper years. The virtues of youth gave way to the vices of age.

XXXIII. Mithridates was the first of the petty kings of Asia, who took a decisive part. He drew his brother Pharasmanes into the league, and engaged that monarch to employ both force and stratagem to promote the enterprise. By their agents they bribed the servants of Arsaces to end their master's life by poison. The Iberians, in the mean time, entered Armenia with a numerous army, and took possession of the city of Artaxata. On the first intelligence Artabanus despatched his son Orodes, at the head of the Parthian forces, to oppose the enemy, and, in the mean time, sent out his officers to negociate for a body of auxiliaries. Pharasmanes, on his part, spared no pains to reinforce his army. He engaged the Albanians in his service. He listed the Sarmatians; but a part of that people, called the Sceptucians, were willing, according to the custom of the nation, to be hired by any of the powers at war, the ready mercenaries in every quarrel. They were at that time actually engaged on both sides, and of course divided against themselves. The Iberians, having secured the defiles and narrow passes of the country, poured down from the Caspian mountains a large body of their Sarmatian auxiliaries, and soon over-ran all Armenia. The Parthians were not able to advance. The ene-

my was in force at every post, one only road excepted, and that, extending between the Caspian sea and the mountains of Albania, was impassable in the summer months. In that season of the year the Etesian winds blow constantly one way, and, driving the waves before them, lay the country under water. In the winter, the wind from the south rolls the flood back into the deep, and leaves the country a dry and naked shore.

XXXIV. While Orodes saw his succours cut off, Pharasmanes, with augmented numbers, advanced against him. He offered battle, but the enemy declined the conflict. The Iberian rode up to the entrenchments; he endeavoured to provoke the enemy; he cut off their forage, and invested their camp. The Parthians, not used to brook dishonour, gathered in a body round the prince, and demanded the decision of the sword. Their main strength consisted in their cavalry. Pharasmanes added to his horse a large body of infantry. His own subjects, and the forces from Albania, dwelling chiefly in wilds and forests, were inured, by their mode of life, to labour and fatigue. If we may believe the account which they give of their origin, they are descended from the people of Thessaly, who followed Jason, when that adventurer, having issue by Medea, returned to Colchis, on the death of Æetes, to take possession of the vacant throne. Concerning the Greek hero, and the oracle of Phryxus, various traditions are current amongst them. For the last their veneration is such, that in their sacrifices a ram is never offered as a victim, the people conceiving that Phryxus was conveyed across the sea by an animal of that species, or in a ship with that figure at the head. The two armies were drawn out in order of battle. Orodes, to animate the valour of his men, called to their mind the glory of the eastern empire, and the race of the Arsacides. "They "were now to cope with a band of mercenaries, led by "an Iberian chief, of mean extraction, ignoble, and "obscure." In the opposite army, Pharsamanes pressed every topic that could inflame the ardour of his troops. "They were the men who never yielded to

"the Parthian yoke; they fought now for conquest: "the more bold the enterprise, the greater would be "their glory. If they gave ground, or turned their "backs on the enemy, shame and ruin would pursue "them. Look round," he said, "and view both armies. "Behold on our side a dreadful front of war; on that of "the enemy an unwarlike band of Medes, gay in their "apparel, and glittering with gold. Here we have men "and steel; there cowards, and booty to reward our "valour."

XXXV. In the Sarmatian ranks it was not the general only that harangued the men. By mutual exhortations, according to their custom, they roused each other's valour. They resolved to reserve their darts, and rush on to a close engagement. The field of battle presented an attack in different forms. The Parthians, skilled alike in the onset and the retreat, endeavoured to open their ranks, in order to gain room for the discharge of their arrows. The Sarmatians threw their bows aside, determined with their swords and pikes to decide the fortune of the day. In one place was seen an engagement of the cavalry; they advanced to the charge; they wheeled about; they changed with sudden velocity. In another quarter the infantry fought hand to hand, and buckler to buckler. They attacked, and were repulsed; they wounded, and were wounded. The Iberians and Albanians grappled with the enemy; they pulled them by main force from their horses; they distracted them by two different modes of engaging. Their cavalry rushed on, and their infantry stood close embodied. The two adverse generals, Orodes and Pharasmanes, exerted every effort. They rushed into the heat of the action: they encouraged the brave; they rallied the broken ranks, and signalized themselves in every part of the field. Conspicuous to all, at length they knew each other. At the sight, with instinctive fury, their horses at full speed, they rushed forward to the charge, bellowing revenge, and darting their javelins. Pharasmanes, with a well-directed weapon, pierced the helmet of Orodes; but, hurried on by the fury of his horse, he was not able to pursue his advantage. Orodes was sheltered by his

guards, who flew to his assistance. A report that he was slain spread through the ranks. The spirit of the Parthians began to droop, and victory declared for the Iberians.

XXXVI. Artabanus, to repair the loss, marched with the whole strength of his kingdom. The Iberians knew the course of the country, and by their valour gained a second victory. The Parthian, notwithstanding, kept the field, till such time as Vitellius advanced with his legions, intending, as was industriously given out, to enter Mesopotamia. To avoid a war with Rome, the Parthian king abandoned Armenia, and returned to his own dominions. From that time his ruin may be dated. Vitellius carried on a correspondence with the leading men of Parthia, and, to incite them to a revolt, represented Artabanus as a king, cruel in time of peace, and in war disastrous to the whole nation. Sinnaces, at the head, as already mentioned, of a powerful faction, drew to his interest his father, Abdageses, and other malecontents, who were now, by the unprosperous events of war, determined to throw off the mask. A great number through fear, and not from principle, hitherto inactive, went over to the disaffected. Artabanus found himself deserted on every side. He had only one expedient left. He chose for his body-guard a band of mercenaries, men void of honour, the outcasts of their country, to good and evil, vice and virtue, alike indifferent, and for their hire ready to perpetrate every crime. With these attendants the fugitive monarch sought the frontiers of Scythia. His ruined cause, he still hoped, would find support from the Carmanians, and the people of Hyrcania, with whom he was connected by ties of affinity. He relied, moreover, on the fickle temper of the Parthians. A wavering and inconstant people, always disgusted with the reigning prince, and, after his expulsion, prone to repent, might act towards himself with the same versatility, and once more declare in his favour.

XXXVII. The throne being in this manner vacant, and the Parthians, in their rage for innovation, appearing ready to embrace a new master, Vitellius

thought it time to fire the ambition of Tiridates, and to support him in the enterprise, marched with the auxiliaries, and the strength of his legions, to the banks of the Euphrates. In order to propitiate the river god, preparations were made for a solemn sacrifice. The Roman, according to the rites of his country, offered a swine, a ram, and a bull; a horse was the victim slain by Tiridates. While they were thus employed, the people of the country came in with an account that the Euphrates, without any fall of rain, swelled miraculously above its banks, and, the waves with a rapid motion turning round in circling eddies, the foam on the surface presented the form of a diadem. This was deemed a favourable omen. By others, who judged with more penetration, the prognostic was seen in a different light. According to their interpretation, it promised success at first, and a speedy reverse of fortune. In support of this opinion it was observed, that the earth and heavens hold forth unerring signals; but the omens, collected from the appearance of rivers, were, like the element from which they spring, always uncertain. They appear and vanish in a moment.

A bridge of boats being prepared, the whole army passed over the Euphrates. While they lay encamped, Ornospades, at the head of a large body of cavalry, amounting to several thousands, came in as an auxiliary. This man was a native of Parthia, formerly banished from his country; but for his services under Tiberius, during the war in Dalmatia, admitted to the privileges of a Roman citizen. Being afterwards reconciled to his native prince, he rose to the first honours of the state, and was appointed governor of that whole region which lies between the Tigris and the Euphrates, for that reason called MESOPOTAMIA. Sinnaces, in a short time after, joined the army with a strong reinforcement. Abdageses, the pillar of the party, delivered up the royal treasure, and the richest ornaments of the crown. Vitellius considered the business as finished. The Roman eagles appeared on the banks of the Euphrates, and more was unnecessary. He gave his best advice to Tiridates and the authors of the revolution. Addressing

himself to the prince, "Remember," he said, "that "you are the grandson of Phraates, and that you "have been trained up by Tiberius: let that reflec- "tion be ever present to your mind: it will animate "you in the career of glory." He exhorted the grandees of Parthia to pay obedience to their king, and due respect to the Roman name. By being faithful to both, they would at once fulfil their engagements, and maintain their honour. Having made this arrangement, he returned with his legions into Syria.

XXXVIII. In relating these transactions, I have thrown together, in one connected series, the business of two campaigns; in order, by a view of Asiatic affairs, to relieve the attention of the reader, and give the mind some respite from domestic misery. From the death of Sejanus three years had elapsed, and yet neither time nor supplications, nor even a deluge of blood could soften the cruelty of Tiberius. Things that mitigate the resentment of others, made no impression on their unforgiving temper. Crimes of an ancient date were revived as recent facts, and charges without proof passed for demonstrations of guilt. The band of informers joined in a league against Fulcinius Trio. That citizen, knowing that his fate was determined, put an end to his life. In his will he spoke in the bitterest terms of Macro, and the emperor's freedmen. Nor did he spare Tiberius. His understanding, he said, was reduced by years and infirmity to a state of dotage, and his long absence was no better than banishment from his country. These reflections the heirs of Trio wished to suppress; but Tiberius ordered the will to be read in public; perhaps to show the world that he could allow full liberty of thinking, and despise the censure that pointed at himself; perhaps, having been for many years blind to the villany of Sejanus, he chose, at last, that invectives of every sort should be brought to light, to the end that truth, always warped by flattery, might reach his ear, though undisguised, and at the expense of his reputation. About the same time died by his own hand Granius Martianus, a member of the senate, who found himself attacked by Caius Gracchus on the law of vio-

lated majesty. Tatius Granius, who had served the office of prætor, was prosecuted in like manner, and condemned to suffer death.

XXXIX. The same fate attended Trebellienus Rufus and Sextius Paconianus; the former despatched himself, and the latter, for some sarcastic verses against the emperor, the production of his prison hours, was strangled in the jail. Of all these tragic scenes Tiberius had the earliest intelligence; not, as before, by messengers that crossed the sea to the isle of Capreæ; he heard the news in the very neighbourhood of Rome, hovering about the city at so small a distance, that often on the same day, or, at most, a single night intervening, the consuls received his answers to their despatches, and his final orders for immediate vengeance. He placed himself in a situation so near the theatre of horror, that he could almost see the blood that streamed in every family, and hear the stroke of the executioner.

Towards the end of the year died Poppæus Sabinus, a man of humble birth, but, by the partiality of two emperors, raised to the consulship, and distinguished by triumphal honours. During a series of four-and-twenty years, the government of considerable provinces was committed to his care, not for any extraordinary talents, but because he had a capacity of a level for business, and not above it.

XL. The next consulship was that of Quintus Plautius and Sextus Papinius. In the course of this year Lucius Aruseius and others died under the hand of the executioner: their fate, however cruel, passed unheeded among the common occurrences of the time. Scenes of blood were grown familiar, and made no impression. And yet the fate of Vibulenus Agrippa was attended with circumstances that struck a general panic. His trial came on before the senate. As soon as the prosecutors closed their case, he swallowed a deadly poison, which he had concealed under his robe, and instantly expired. He was seized, notwithstanding, and in that condition dragged to a dungeon, where the lictor fastened his cord round the neck of a dead man. Even Tigranes, who had formerly swayed the

sceptre of Armenia, suffered without distinction. The title of royalty did not exempt him from the lot of a common citizen.

Caius Galba, of consular rank, and the two Blæsi embraced a voluntary death; Galba, because by letters from Tiberius, written in terms of acrimony, he was excluded from the usual mode of obtaining a province by lot; and the Blæsi, because the order of priesthood, which had been promised in their day of prosperity, was, since they were no longer in favour, withheld from them, and to those vacant dignities others were appointed. A step so decisive they considered as nothing less than a signal to die; and they obeyed.

Æmilia Lepida, whose marriage with Drusus has been mentioned, remained, during the life of Lepidus, her father, in perfect security, but detested by the public. Her protector being now no more, the informers seized their opportunity, and accused her of adultery with a slave. Of her guilt no doubt was entertained. She made no defence, but executed justice on herself.

XLI. About this time the Cliteans, a people subject to Achelaus, king of Cappadocia, impatient of being taxed according to the system practised in the Roman provinces, made a secession to the heights of mount Taurus. Being their possessed of the advantage-ground, they were able to defend themselves against their sovereign, and his unwarlike troops. To quell the insurgents, Vitellius, governor of Syria, dispatched Marcus Trebellius at the head of four thousand legionary soldiers, and a select detachment of auxiliaries. The barbarians had taken post on two hills; the least was called Cadra, and the other Davara. Trebellius inclosed both with lines of circumvallation. All who dared to sally out were put to the sword; the rest were reduced by thirst and famine.

Meanwhile, Tiridates was well nigh established on the throne of Parthia. The cities of Nicephorium, Anthemusia, and other places, originally settled by the Macedonians, and from their founders deriving names of Greek termination, opened their gates to the

new monarch. Halus and Artemita, two Parthian cities, followed the example; the people every where vying with each other in demonstrations of joy. A revolution, by which Artabanus, a tyrant bred among the Scythians, was driven from the throne, gave universal satisfaction to the Parthians. They knew that Tiridates had been educated among the Romans, and, from his arts of civilization, expected a mild and equitable government.

XLII. The inhabitants of Seleucia declared for the new king in a style of flattery that exceeded all their neighbours. Seleucia is a fortified city of considerable strength. The barbarity of Parthian manners never gained admission amongst them. Being a colony planted by Seleucus, they still retained the institutions of their Grecian founder. A body of three hundred, chosen for their wealth or superior wisdom, gave the form of a senate. The people have their share in the government. When both orders act with a spirit of union, they are too strong for the Parthians. If they clash among themselves, and one faction looks abroad for support, the foreign prince, who arrives as the friend of a party, becomes the oppressor of all. In the reign of Artabanus this fatal consequence was actually felt. That monarch threw the whole weight into the scale of the nobles, and the people, by consequence, were surrendered as the slaves of a violent aristocracy. This form of government was agreeable to the ideas of eastern despotism. A regular democracy holds too much of civil liberty, while the denomination of the few differs but little from absolute monarchy.

The reception of Tiridates, at Seleucia, was splendid beyond all example. To the homage which the practice of ages had established, new honours were added by the inventive genius of flattery. Amidst the applause and acclamations of the people, reproaches loud and vehement were thrown out against Artabanus, a man related, by the maternal line only, to the house of the Arsacidæ, and by his actions, a disgrace to the name. Tiridates sided with the people of Seleucia, and restored the democracy. A day for his

coronation was still to be fixed. While that business was in agitation, despatches arrived from Hiero and Phraates, two leading men, and governors of extensive provinces. They desired that the ceremony might be deferred for a few days. A request from men of their importance came with weight, and was accordingly followed. The court, in the mean time, removed to Ctesiphon, the capital of the empire, and the seat of government. New delays were thrown in the way by the two grandees, and the business of the coronation was protracted from time to time. At length the regent of the country, called the SURENA, proceeded, according to the national custom, to solemnize the inauguration of the king. In the presence of a numerous assembly, and amidst the shouts and acclamations of the people, he invested Tiridates with the regal diadem.

XLIII. If, after this ceremony, Tiridates had penetrated at once into the heart of the kingdom, and shown himself to the interior provinces, by that decisive step the minds of such as wavered had been fixed, and the prince had mounted the throne with the consent of the nation. He staid, imprudently, to amuse himself with the siege of a castle, in which were lodged the concubines of Artabanus, with all the royal treasure. The delay gave time for treachery and revolt. Phraates, Hiero, and others of the nobility, who were not present at the coronation, turned their thoughts, with their usual love of innovation, towards the deposed king. For this conduct their motives were various. Some acted from their fears, and others from their ill-will to Abdageses, who had gained the supreme authority at court, and the entire ascendant over the new monarch. The malecontents went in quest of Artabanus. He was found in Hyrcania, covered with wretchedness, and with his bow and arrow procuring his daily sustenance. On the first appearance of his friends, he was seized with terror, suspecting nothing less than treachery, and a design against his life. Being assured of their fidelity, and their resolution to restore him to his dominions, he felt his hopes revived: and whence, he said, this sud-

den change? Hiero gave this answer: "Tiridates is "no better than a boy; nor is the royal dignity vest- "ed in a prince descended from the line of the Arsa- "cidæ. Enervated by the luxuries of Rome, the strip- "ling contents himself with the shadow of authority, "while the whole power of the state is in the hands "of Abdageses."

XLIV. The politic king, formed during a long reign in the school of experience, knew that men whose friendship is fallacious, may notwithstanding be believed, when they avow their hatred. Without loss of time he raised a supply of men among the Scythians, and marched forward with intent to give no time either to the arts of his enemies, or the natural levity of his friends. The sordid habit in which he was found, he still continued to wear; hoping, by his wretched appearance, to make an impression on the passions of the multitude. He omitted nothing that could serve his cause; by fraud, by entreaty, by every artifice, he tried to allure the wavering, and to animate the brave. By rapid marches, he soon reached the neighbourhood of Seleucia, at the head of a powerful army.

Tiridates, alarmed at the news of his approach, and soon after terrified at his actual presence, began to deliberate about the measures in that exigence fittest to be pursued. Should he try the issue of a battle, or draw the war into length? In his councils there was nothing like decision. The officers of warlike spirit were for a sudden blow, while the rash levies of Artabanus, out of heart, fatigued by their march, and not yet united by principle, had as yet no affection for a king whom they had so lately deposed. Traitors yesterday, they were now no better than pretended friends. Abdageses was of a contrary opinion. To retreat into Mesopotamia was, in his judgment, the safest measure. Having gained the opposite side of the river, Tiridates might there stand at bay, till the Armenians, the Elymæans, and other nations in their rear, had time to take the field. Succours might be expected from the Roman general. When their forces were all assembled, it would then be time to hazard a

battle. This measure was adopted. Abdageses was high in authority, and the unwarlike genius of Tiridates shrunk from danger. Their retreat had the appearance of an army put to rout. The consequences were fatal. The Arabs were the first to abandon Tiridates: a general defection followed. Some betook themselves to their native home, and others went over to the standard of Artabanus. Tiridates, with a handful of men, passed into Syria, and by his conduct made the apology of all who deserted his cause. None had reason to blush for betraying a man, who betrayed himself.

XLV. In the course of this year a dreadful fire broke out at Rome, and laid mount Aventine, with part of the adjoining circus, in ashes. Tiberius had the address to turn this calamity to his own glory. He ordered the value of the houses and insulated mansions, which were destroyed, to be paid to their respective owners. The sum amounted to no less than one hundred thousand great sesterces. The munificence of the prince was the more applauded, as building for his own use was not his taste. The temple of Augustus, and Pompey's theatre, were his only public structures. When both were finished, he did not so much as think of dedicating them; perhaps to show his contempt of fame; perhaps because old age had sunk his vigour. To estimate the damage sustained by each individual, his four sons-in-law were appointed, namely, Cneius Domitius, Cassius Longinus, Marcus Vinicius, and Rubellius Blandus. At the desire of the consuls, Publius Petronius was added to the commission. Public honours were decreed to the emperor with all the variety that adulation could suggest. Which were acceptable, and which rejected, is uncertain; since he was then near his end, and perhaps never declared his mind.

In a short time after, Cneius Acerronius and Caius Pontius entered on the consulship, and it was their lot to close the reign of Tiberius. Macro was, at this time, in the zenith of his power. He had been assiduous in paying his court to Caligula; and now, when he saw the emperor declining fast, his zeal for the young

prince became every day more conspicuous. In a short time after the death of Claudia, who had been married to Caligula, he made his own wife, Ennia, throw out the lure for his affections, till she obtained a promise of marriage. In this she found no difficulty. Caligula wished for nothing so much as an opportunity to seize the sovereign power: and to second his ambition, there was no project which he was not ready to embrace. The ferocity of his nature left him little time for reflection, and the violence of his passions clouded his understanding: he had studied under his grandfather, and in that school acquired the arts of dissimulation.

XLVI. The character of Caligula did not escape the penetrating eye of Tiberius. Hence his irresolution on the important point of naming a successor. His grandsons naturally were present to his mind. The heir of his son Drusus was the nearest in blood, and natural affection spoke in his favour: but the prince was still of tender years. Caligula had attained the prime of manhood; but he was the son of Germanicus, and, for that reason, a favourite of the people; both strong motives to excite the aversion of Tiberius. Claudius was not entirely overlooked. His time of life rendered him fit for that exalted station, and he had shown a taste for the liberal arts; but he wanted vigour of mind: nature had given him talents, but withheld the power of using them with any solid advantage. In this perplexity, Tiberius weighed every circumstance, but still could form no resolution. To name a person who was not of the imperial family, were to degrade the memory of Augustus, and leave the house of Cæsar exposed to the contempt of posterity. This, in all events, he was determined to avoid, not with a view to present fame, for that had long since ceased to be his passion, and yet he wished to preserve the glory of an illustrious line, and transmit it unimpaired to future ages.

At length, fatigued with thinking, and growing every day weaker, he left to chance what he had not vigour to decide. He had, notwithstanding, some foreknowledge of what was to happen after him. From certain

expressions that fell from him, this may be collected. His reproach to Macro, "that he turned from the set-"ting to the rising sun," was neither dark nor equivocal. He said to Caligula, who, on some occasion, treated the character of Sylla with contempt and ridicule, "You will have the vices of that great man, "without one of his virtues." In a short time after, while with tears of affection, he clasped in his arms the youngest of his grandsons, he observed the stern countenance of Caligula, and calmly told him, "You "will kill this boy, and fall yourself by some other "hand." Tiberius was now declining fast, and yet, in that decay of nature, he abated nothing from his usual gratifications. Dissembling to the last, he endured every encroachment on his constitution with calm composure. Patience, he thought, would pass for vigour. To ridicule the practice of physic, and make a jest of all who, after thirty, did not understand their own constitutions, had been long the bent of his humour.

XLVII. At Rome, in the mean time, prosecutions were set on foot to terminate in blood after the death of Tiberius. Acutia, formerly the wife of Publius Vitellius, was charged on the law of violated majesty by Lælius Balbus. She was condemned; but the decree, by which the senate adjudged a recompense to the prosecutor, was suspended by the interposition of Junius Otho, the tribune of the people. From that moment Balbus and Otho became open enemies. Fierce contentions followed, and, at last, ended in the banishment of Otho. Albucilla, a woman famous for the variety of her intrigues, and her marriage with Satrius Secundus, (the man who informed against Sejanus,) was charged with a conspiracy against the prince. Cneius Domitius, Vibius Marsus, and Lucius Arruntius, were all three involved in the same prosecution, being, as was alleged, connected in a course of adultery with Albucilla, and, by consequence, accomplices in all her crimes. The illustrious birth of Domitius has been already mentioned. Marsus derived great splendour from his ancestors, and was, besides, in an eminent degree adorned with literature. In the state

of the proceedings laid before the senate, it appeared that Macro presided at the examination of the witnesses, and saw the slaves put to the question; but no letter on the subject arrived from Tiberius. Hence a strong suspicion, that Macro, taking advantage of the feeble state of his master, seized the opportunity to wreak his malice on Arruntius, whom he was known to prosecute with inveterate hatred.

XLVIII. Domitius relying on his defence, employed himself in the necessary preparation. Marsus gave out that he was resolved to end his days by famine. The artifice saved both their lives. The friends of Arruntius tried all their influence and their best advice. They entreated him to protract the time by studied delays. Arruntius answered with firmness: "The "same part can not, with propriety, be acted by all "characters. What is honourable in one, may be un- "worthy in another. As to myself, I have lived long "enough, nay, too long, and to my own disgrace. For "that, and that only, I now reproach myself. I have "lingered in life, amidst surrounding dangers; I have "dragged a weary old age, exposed to the proud man's "insult, and the malice of pernicious ministers; "hated at first by Sejanus, and now by Macro; in "in every stage of life obnoxious to lawless power. "My enemies had no crime to lay to my charge, un- "less it be a crime to detest evil men, and evil mea- "sures. Life is no longer worth my care: it may, "indeed, be prolonged beyond the term that seems to "remain for Tiberius; but from a youthful tyrant, "ready to seize the commonwealth as his prey, what "shield can guard me? In despotic power there is a "charm that can poison the best understanding. Of "this truth Tiberius is an example. And is it to be "expected that Caligula, scarce yet arrived to the state "of manhood, a novice in business, with a mind trained "up in the most pernicious maxims, will, under such a "guide as Macro, pursue better measures? Macro "will direct his councils; that very Macro, who, for "his pre-eminence in guilt, was selected to work the "downfall of Sejanus. Since that time, what has "been his character? He has been the scourge, the

"oppressor of the commonwealth. A period of ca-
"lamity, more dreadful than what we have seen, is
"yet to come; from the memory of the past, and the
"pangs of future misery, I choose to make my
"escape." Having, in this prophetic strain, delivered his sentiments, he opened his veins, and bled to death. That he acted with wisdom, as well as courage, the times that follow will give ample proof.

Albucilla made an attempt on her own life; but the wound not proving mortal, she was, by order of the senate, hurried away to prison. The senate passed a decree against such as were connected with her in adulterous practices. By that sentence, Grafidius Sacerdos, of prætorian rank, was banished to an island, and Pontius Fregellanus was expelled the senate. The like judgment was pronounced against Lœlius Balbus, the fathers concurring with pleasure in the condemnation of a man, whose pernicious talents and overbearing eloquence were ever ready to work the ruin of truth and virtue.

XLIX. About the same time, Sextus Papinius, a man descended from a family of consular rank, chose a mode of death both shocking and ignominious. He threw himself headlong from a precipice, and expired on the spot. The cause of this dreadful catastrophe was imputed to his mother. Having conceived an unnatural passion for her son, this woman, though often repulsed, still persisted to solicit his passion, and, at length, by alluring arts and the baits of luxury, reduced the young man to a situation, in which an act of despair was his only remedy. Being cited to appear before the senate, she threw herself at the feet of the fathers, and tried by every art to awaken compassion. The anguish of a parent, she said, pierced her to the quick, and the weakness of her sex was unequal to such a load of misery. She omitted nothing that could touch the heart, and mitigate resentment; but the fathers were inexorable. She was banished from Rome for ten years, that, in the mean time, her second son might pass the season of life in which the young and tender mind is liable to seduction.

L. Tiberius now drew near his end: his strength

declined, his spirits sunk, and every thing failed, except his dissimulation. The same austerity still remained, the same energy and vigour of mind. He talked in a decisive tone; he looked with eagerness; and even, at times, affected an air of gaiety. Dissembling to the last, he hoped by false appearances to hide the decay of nature. Weary, restless, and impatient, he could not stay long in one place. After various changes, he stopped at a villa, formerly the property of Lucullus, near the promontory of Misenum. It was here first known that his dissolution was approaching fast. The discovery was made in the following manner. A physician, of the name of Charicles, highly eminent in his profession, attended the train of Tiberius, not employed to prescribe, but occasionally assisting with friendly advice. Pretending to have avocations that required his attendance elsewhere, he approached the emperor to take his leave, and respectfully laying hold of his hand, contrived in the act of saluting it, to feel his pulse. The artifice did not escape the notice of Tiberius. It probably gave him offence, but, for that reason, he smothered his resentment. With an air of cheerfulness, he ordered the banquet to be served, and, seemingly with intent to honour his departing friend, continued at table beyond his usual time. Charicles was not to be deceived. He saw a rapid decline, and assured Macro that two days, at most, would close the scene. For that event measures were immediately taken: councils were held in private, and despatches were sent to the army, and the several commanders at their respective stations. On the seventeenth before the calends of April, Tiberius had a fainting fit: he lay for some time in a state of langour, speechless, without motion, and was thought to be dead. A band of courtiers surrounded Caligula, eager to pay their court, and all congratulating the prince on his accession to the imperial dignity. Caligula was actually going forth to be proclaimed emperor, when word was brought, that Tiberius was come to himself, and called for a cordial to revive his fainting spirits. The whole party was struck with terror: the crowd dis-

persed: some with dejected looks, others with a cheerful mien, as if unconscious of what had happened. Caligula stood at gaze, astonished, and almost out of his senses. He had, but a moment before, one foot on the throne, and now was thrown from the summit of his ambition. He remained fixed in despair, as if awaiting the stroke of death. Macro alone was undismayed. With firmness and presence of mind, he cleared the emperor's room, and gave orders that the remains of life should be smothered under a load of clothes. Such was the end of Tiberius, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

LI. He was the son of Tiberius Nero; by the paternal and maternal line of the house of Claudius, though his mother passed by adoption into the Livian, and afterwards into the Julian family. The beginning of his days was clouded with misfortunes, and exposed to various perils. In his infancy, he was torn away from Rome, and forced to wander with his father, then on the list of the proscribed. When a marriage took place between Livia and Augustus, he was introduced into the imperial house, but had to contend with powerful rivals, as long as Marcellus, Agrippa, and the two Cæsars, Caius and Lucius, flourished at the court of Augustus. In the eyes of the people, his brother Drusus overshadowed him. By his marriage with Julia, his situation was rendered still more embarrassing. Whether he connived at her vices, or abandoned her in resentment, the dilemma was, either way, full of difficulty. Being recalled from the Isle of Rhodes, he found Augustus deprived of heirs, and from that time continued for twelve years, without a rival, the hope and pillar of the imperial family. He succeeded to the empire, and governed Rome near three-and-twenty years. His manners, like his fortune, had their revolutions, and their distinctive periods; amiable, while a private man; and, in the highest employments under Augustus, esteemed and honoured. During the lives of Drusus and Germanicus, he played an artificial character, concealing his vices, and assuming the exteriors of virtue. After their decease, and while his mother

lived, good and evil were equally blended in his conduct. Detested for his cruelty, he had the art, while he loved or feared Sejanus, to throw a veil over his most depraved and vicious appetites. All restraint being at length removed, he broke out without fear or shame, and, during the remainder of his life, hurried away by his own unbridled passions, made his reign one scene of lust, and cruelty, and horror.

THE

ANNALS OF TACITUS.

BOOK XI.

I. Messalina was convinced that Poppæa had been for some time engaged in a course of adultery with Valerius Asiaticus, who had enjoyed the honour of two consulships. She had, besides, an eye to the elegant gardens, formerly the pride of Lucullus, which Asiaticus had improved in the highest taste and magnificence. Bent on the destruction of Poppæa and her lover, she suborned Suillius to carry on the prosecution. Sosibius, the tutor of Britannicus, entered into the conspiracy. This man had the ear of Claudius. In secret whispers, and under a mask of friendship, he alarmed the emperor with the necessity of being on his guard against the machinations of his enemies. "Overgrown wealth," he said, "in the "hands of a private citizen, is always big with danger "to the reigning prince. When Caligula fell, Asiati- "cus was the principal actor in that bloody tragedy. "He owned the fact in a full assembly of the people, "and claimed the glory of the deed. That bold ex- "ploit has made him popular at Rome; his fame is "spread through the provinces: and, even now, he "meditates a visit to the German armies. Born at Vi- "enna, he has great family interest and powerful con- "nexions in Gaul. A man thus supported will be able "to incite his countrymen to a revolt." The hint was enough for Claudius. Without further inquiry, he despatched Crispinus, who commanded the prætorian guards, with a band of soldiers. Their march resembled a body of troops going on a warlike expedition. Asiaticus was seized at Baiæ, and brought to Rome in chains.

II. He was not suffered to appear before the senate.

The cause was heard in the emperor's chamber, in the presence of Messalina. Suillius stood forth as prosecutor. He stated the corruption of the army, and accused Asiaticus as the author of it. By bribes, by largesses, and by the practice of abominable vices, the soldiers were seduced from their duty: they were prepared for any enterprise, however atrocious. The crime of adultery with Poppæa helped to swell the charge; and, to crown all, the prisoner had unmanned himself by his unnatural passions. Stung to the quick by this imputation, Asiaticus turned to the prosecutor, "And ask your sons," he said; "they will tell you "that I am a man." He went into his defence in such a strain of pathetic eloquence, that Claudius felt the strongest emotions. Even Messalina dropped a tear. She left the room to wipe the gush of nature from her eyes, but first told Vitellius not to suffer the prisoner to escape. In the mean time, she hastened the destruction of Poppæa. She sent her agents to alarm her with the horrors of a jail, and drive her, by that dismal prospect, to an act of desperation. Her malice was unknown to Claudius. He was so little in the secret, that, a few days afterwards, having invited Scipio as his guest, he asked him, "Why his wife was not of the party?" Scipio made answer, "She is dead."

III. Claudius was, for some time, in suspense. He was inclined to favour Asiaticus, but Vitellius interposed. With tears in his eyes, he talked of the friendship which had long subsisted between the prisoner and himself; he mentioned their mutual habits at the court of Antonia, the emperor's mother; he stated the public merit of Asiaticus; and, in particular, the glory of his late expedition into Britain: he omitted nothing that could excite compassion, but, at last, concluded, (with a stroke of treachery,) that to allow him to choose his mode of dying was an indulgence due to so distinguished a character. This cruel species of clemency was adopted by Claudius. The friends of Asiaticus recommended abstinence as a mode of death easy and gradual. He scorned the pretended lenity, and betook himself to his usual exercises. He bathed

and supped with alacrity of mind. "To die," he said, "by the intrigues of an artful woman, or the treache-"ry of a debauched and profligate impostor, such as "Vitellius, was an ignominious catastrophe. He en-"vied those who perished by the systematic cruelty "of Tiberius, or the headlong fury of Caligula." Having declared these sentiments, he opened a vein, and bled to death. Before he gave himself the mortal wound, he had the fortitude to survey his funeral pile. Perceiving that the flame might reach the branches of the trees, and hurt the shade of his garden, he ordered it to be removed to a more distant spot. Such was the tranquillity with which he encountered death.

IV. The senate was convened. Suillius followed his blow. He preferred an accusation against two Roman knights, of the name of Petra; both distinguished by their rank and character. The crime objected to them was, that they had made their house convenient to Poppæa, when she carried on her intrigue with Mnester. The charge against one of them imported, that, in a dream, his imagination presented to him the figure of Claudius crowned with a sheaf of corn, but the ears inverted downward. This vision was understood by the criminal as the prognostic of an approaching famine. Some will have it, that the wreath consisted of vine branches, with the leaves entirely faded, and this was deemed an omen of the emperor's death towards the end of the ensuing autumn. Whatever it might be, it is certain that it was held to be an act of treason. The two brothers died for a dream. By a decree of the senate, Crispinus was rewarded with fifteen thousand sesterces, and the prætorian dignity. On the motion of Vitellius, a vote of ten thousand sesterces passed in favour of Sosibius, the preceptor of Britannicus, and the faithful adviser of the emperor. In the debate on this occasion, Scipio was called upon for his opinion: he rose, and said, "Since "the conduct of my wife Poppæa must appear to me "in the same light that it does to this assembly, let "me be thought to concur with the general voice."

A delicate stroke of prudence, yielding to the necessity of the times, yet not forgetting the ties of conjugal affection.

V. From this time, the rage of Suillius knew no bounds. A number of others followed in the same track, all rivals in iniquity. The constitution had been long since annihilated; the functions of the magistrates were wrested out of their hands; the will of the prince was the law; and, by consequence, the crew of informers grew rich by injustice and oppression. Their eloquence was put up to sale, like any other commodity at market. Samius, a Roman knight of distinction, has left a memorable instance. He had retained Suillius with a fee of ten thousand crowns; but finding that his cause was betrayed, he went to the house of the perfidious orator, and fell upon his own sword. To check this fatal mischief, a motion was made in the senate by Caius Silius, then consul elect. Of this man, his elevation, and his downfall, due notice will be taken hereafter. He represented, in strong colours, the avarice of the advocates. The fathers, with one voice, agreed to revive the Cincian law, by which it was ordained in ancient times, that no advocate, for a fee, or gratuity of any kind, should prostitute his talents.

VI. The informers opposed the motion. They saw that the blow was aimed at themselves. Silius grew more eager. He was at open enmity with Suillius, and, for that reason, pressed the business with his utmost vigour. He cited the orators of ancient times, men of pure and upright principles, who considered honest fame, and the fair applause of posterity, as the true reward of genius. "Eloquence," he said, "the "first of liberal arts, if it condescended to be let out "for hire, was no better than a sordid trade. If it be "came mercenary, and sold itself to the highest bid "der, no truth can be expected; integrity is at an end. "Take from venal oratory all its views of interest, and "the number of suitors will, of course, be diminished. "In the reigning corruption of the modern forum, pri"vate feuds, mutual accusations, family quarrels, ha"tred, and animosity, are kept alive. The practisers

"live by the passions of mankind, as physicians thrive "by an epidemic distemper. Call to mind Caius Asinius, "Marcus Messala, and, among the names of more re- "cent date, remember the Arruntii and Æserini; men "who never set themselves up to auction; never made "a bargain and sale of their talents, but rose by their "integrity and their unbought eloquence to the high- "est honours of the state." This speech from the consul elect, was heard with general approbation. The fathers were on the point of declaring, by a decree, that all who took the wages of oratory should be deemed guilty of extortion. Suillius and Cossutianus, with many others who were conscious of their evil practices, clearly saw, that if the decree passed the senate, it would be nothing less than a vote of pains and penalties against themselves. To ward off the blow, they pressed round the emperor, praying an indemnity for past transactions. Claudius seeming by a nod to assent to their petition, they took courage, and argued their case as follows:

VII. "Where is the orator who can flatter himself "that his name will reach posterity? The interests "of society require advocates by profession, men ver- "sed in questions of right and wrong, and ready, as "well as able, to protect the weak, against the proud "and affluent. But eloquence is not a gratuitous gift; "it is acquired by toil and industry. To conduct the "affairs of others, the orator neglects his own con- "cerns. Life is variegated with different employ- "ments: some betake themselves to the profession of "arms; others to the arts of husbandry: no man em- "braces a particular calling, without having before- "hand made an estimate of the profit. Asinius and "Messala have been cited: but it was easy for men in "their situation, enriched as they were in the civil "wars between Augustus and Antony, to forego all fur- "ther views of emolument. It was easy for the Ar- "runtii and the Æserini, the heirs of great and opu- "lent families, to act with an elevation of mind supe- "rior to the profits of the bar. And yet, we are not "now to learn what prodigious sums Publius Clodius "and Caius Curio received as the reward of their elo-

"quence. As to ourselves, we have not the advan-
"tages of fortune: in a time of profound tranquillity,
"it is but just that we should be allowed to live by
"the arts of peace. The case of men descended from
"plebeian families merits consideration. Without the
"career of eloquence, they have no way to emerge
"from obscurity. Take from men the just fruit of
"their studies, and learning will grow to seed." This reasoning was far from honourable, but it had weight with Claudius. He took a middle course, and fixed the legal perquisite at the sum of ten thousand sesterces. All who presumed to transgress that line were to be deemed guilty of extortion, by law compellable to refund.

VIII. About this time Mithridates, who, as has been mentioned, swayed the sceptre of Armenia, and was brought in chains to the tribunal of Caligula, was released by the direction of Claudius. He set out from Rome to take possession of his kingdom, relying on the support of his brother Pharasmanes, king of Iberia. By advices from that monarch, it appeared that the Parthian state was convulsed by internal divisions, and while the regal diadem was at stake, a people so distracted among themselves would not have leisure to engage in foreign wars. Gotarzes had seized the throne of Parthia, and spilt a deluge of blood. He had murdered his own brother Artabanus, with his wife and son, and by these, and other acts of cruelty, gave his subjects nothing to expect but slaughter and desolation. Determined to shake off the yoke, the people planned a revolution in favour of Bardanes, the surviving brother of Gotarzes. This prince was by nature formed for enterprise. In two days he made a march of no less than three thousand furlongs. He took Gotarzes by surprise, attacked him with sudden fury, and obliged him to consult his safety by flight. He pushed on with vigour to the adjacent provinces, and all, except Seleucia, submitted without resistance. The inhabitants of that city shut their gates. Fired with indignation against a people who had offered the same affront to his father, Bardanes yielded to the impulse of resentment, instead of

pursuing the measures which prudence dictated. He staid to amuse himself with the siege of a place strong by nature, well fortified, amply provided with stores, and on one side defended by a rapid river. Gotarzes, in the mean time, having obtained succours from the Dahans, and the Hyrcanians, returned with a powerful army to renew the war. Bardanes was compelled to raise the siege of Seleucia. He retired to the plains of Bactria, and there pitched his camp.

IX. While the east was thus thrown into convulsions, and the fate of Parthia hung on the doubtful event, Mithridates seized the opportunity to invade the kingdom of Armenia. The Roman legions and the Iberians supported the enterprise. By the former, all the forts and places of strength were levelled to the ground, and by the latter, the open country was laid waste. The Armenians, under the conduct of Demonax, at that time governor of the country, hazarded a battle, and, being defeated, were no longer able to make a stand. The new settlement, however, was for some time retarded by Cotys, king of the lesser Armenia. A party of the nobles had declared in his favour; but, being intimidated by letters from Claudius, they abandoned their project. Mithridates mounted the throne of Armenia, with more ferocity than became a prince in the opening of a new reign. Meanwhile the competitors for the Parthian monarchy, in the moment when they were going to try the issue of a decisive action, agreed on terms of peace. A conspiracy had been formed against them both; but being detected by Gotarzes, the two brothers came to an interview. The meeting was at first conducted with reserve on both sides. After balancing for some time, they embraced; and, taking each other by the hand, bound themselves by an oath before the altar of the gods, to join their united force, in order to punish the treachery of their enemies, and on equitable terms, to compromise the war. The people declared for Bardanes. Gotarzes, accordingly, resigned his pretensions; and, to remove all cause of jealousy, withdrew to the remotest parts of Hyrcania. Bardanes returned in triumph; and Seleucia threw open her gates, after having, during a

siege of seven years, stood at bay with the whole power of the Parthian monarchy, to the disgrace of a people, who, in such a length of time, were unable to reduce that city to subjection.

X. Bardanes, without delay, made himself master of the most important provinces. He intended to invade Armenia; but Vibius Marsus, the governor of Syria, threatening to repel him by force, he abandoned the project. Meanwhile, Gotarzes had leisure to repent of his abdication. The Parthian nobility, who in peaceful times are always impatient of the yoke of slavery, invited him to return. Roused by the call of the people, he soon collected a powerful army. Bardanes marched to meet him as far as the banks of the Erinde. The passage over the river was warmly disputed. After many sharp engagements, Bardanes prevailed. He pushed his conquests with uninterrupted success as far as the river Sinden, which flows between the Dahi and the territory of the Arians. His career of victory ended at that place. Though flushed with the success of their arms, the Parthians disliked a war in regions so far remote. To mark, however, the progress of the victorious troops, and to perpetuate the glory of having put under contribution so many distant nations, where the Arsacides had never penetrated, Bardanes raised a monument on the spot, and marched back to Parthia, proud of his exploits, more oppressive than ever, and, by consequence, more detested. A conspiracy was formed to cut him off; and accordingly, while the king, on a hunting party, void of all suspicion, pursued the pleasures of the chase, his enemy fell upon him with sudden fury. Bardanes, in the prime and vigour of his days, expired under repeated blows. The glory of his reign, however short, would have eclipsed the few of his predecessors who enjoyed a length of days, if to gain the hearts of his people had been as much his ambition, as it was to render himself the terror of his enemies. By his death the kingdom was once more thrown into commotions. The choice of a successor divided the whole nation into factions. A large party adhered to Gotarzes; others declared for Meherdetes, a descendant of Phraates,

at that time an hostage in the hands of the Romans. The interest of Gotarzes proved the strongest; but the people in a short time, weary of his cruelty and wild profusion, sent a private embassy to Rome, requesting that the emperor would be graciously pleased to send Meherdetes to fill the throne of his ancestors.

XI. During the same consulship, in the year of Rome eight hundred, the secular games were celebrated after an interval of sixty-four years since they were solemnized in the reign of Augustus. The chronology observed by Augustus differed from the system of Claudius: but this is not the place for a discussion of that point. I have been sufficiently explicit on the subject in the history of Domitian, who likewise gave an exhibition of the secular games. Being at that time one of the college of fifteen, and invested with the office of prætor, it fell to my province to regulate the ceremonies. Let it not be imagined that this is said from motives of vanity. The fact is, in ancient times the business was conducted under the special directions of the quindecimviral order, while the chief magistrates officiated in the several ceremonies. Claudius thought proper to revive this public spectacle. He attended in the circus, and, in his presence, the Trojan game was performed by the youth of noble birth. Britannicus, the emperor's son, and Lucius Domitius, who by adoption took the name of Nero, and afterwards succeeded to the empire, appeared, with the rest of the band, mounted on superb horses. Nero was received with acclamations, and that mark of popular favour was considered as an omen of his future grandeur. A story, at that time current, gained credit with the populace. Nero in his infancy was said to have been guarded by two serpents; but this idle tale held too much of that love of the marvellous which distinguishes foreign nations. The account given by the prince himself, who was ever unwilling to derogate from his own fame, differed from the common report. He talked of the prodigy, but graced his narrative with one serpent only.

XII. The prejudice in favour of Nero rose alto-

gether from the esteem in which the memory of Germanicus was held by the people at large. The only male heir of that admired commander was naturally an object of attention; and the sufferings of his mother Agrippina touched every heart with compassion. Messalina, it was well known, pursued her with unrelenting malice: she was, even then, planning her ruin. Her suborned accusers soon framed a list of crimes; but the execution of her schemes was, for a time, suspended. A new amour, little short of frenzy, claimed precedence of all other passions. Caius Silius was the person for whom she burned with all the vehemence of wild desire. The graces of his form and manner eclipsed all the Roman youth. That she might enjoy her favourite without a rival, she obliged him to repudiate his wife, Junia Silana, though descended from illustrious ancestors. Silius was neither blind to the magnitude of the crime, nor to the danger of not complying. If he refused, a woman scorned would be sure to gratify her revenge; and, on the other hand, there was a chance of deceiving the stupidity of Claudius. The rewards in view were bright and tempting. He resolved to stand the hazard of future consequences, and enjoy the present moment. Messalina gave a loose to love. She scorned to save appearances. She repeated her visits, not in a private manner, but with all her train. In public places she hung enamoured over him; she loaded him with wealth and honours; and at length, as if the imperial dignity had been already transferred to another house, the retinue of the prince, his slaves, his freedmen, and the whole splendour of the court, adorned the mansion of her favourite.

XIII. Claudius in the mean time, blind to the conduct of his wife, and little suspecting that his bed was dishonoured, gave all his time to the duties of his censorial office. He issued an edict to repress the licentiousness of the theatre. A dramatic performance had been given to the stage by Publius Pomponius, a man of consular rank. On that occasion the author, and several women of the first condition, were treated by the populace with insolence and vile scurrility. This

behaviour called for the interposition of the prince. To check the rapacity of usurers, a law was also passed, prohibiting the loan of money to young heirs, on the contingency of their father's death. The waters which have their source on the Simbruine hills, were conveyed in aqueducts to Rome. Claudius, at the same time, invented the form of new letters, and added them to the Roman alphabet, aware that the language of Greece, in its original state, could not boast of perfection, but received, at different periods, a variety of improvements.

XIV. The Egyptians were the first, who had the ingenuity to express by outward signs the ideas passing in the mind. Under the form of animals they gave a body and a figure to sentiment. Their hieroglyphics were wrought in stone, and are to be seen at this day, the most venerable monuments of human memory. The invention of letters is also claimed by the Egyptians. According to their account, the Phœnicians found legible characters in use throughout Egypt, and, being much employed in navigation, carried them into Greece; importers of the art, but not entitled to the glory of the invention. The history of the matter, as related by the Phœnicians, is, that Cadmus, with a fleet from their country, passed into Greece, and taught the art of writing to a rude and barbarous people. We are told by others, that Cecrops the Athenian, or Linus the Theban, or Palamedes the Argive, who flourished during the Trojan war, invented sixteen letters: the honour of adding to the number, and making a complete alphabet, is ascribed to different authors, and, in particular, to Simonides. In Italy, Damaratus of Corinth, and Evander the Arcadian, introduced the arts of civilization: the former taught the Etrurians, and the latter, the Aborigines, or natives of the country where he settled. The form of the Latin letters was the same as the characters of the ancient Greeks: but the Roman alphabet, like that of all other nations, was scanty in the beginning. In process of time, the original elements were increased. Claudius added three new letters, which, during the remainder of his reign, were frequently inserted, but

after his death fell into disuse. In tables of brass, on which were engraved the ordinances of the people, and which remain to this day, hung up in the temples, and the forum, the shape of the three characters may still be traced.

XV. To regulate the college of augurs was the next care of Claudius. He referred the business to the consideration of the senate, observing to that assembly, "That an ancient and venerable institution ought not "to be suffered, for want of due attention, to sink into "oblivion. In times of danger, the commonwealth re- "sorted to the soothsayers, and that order of men re- "stored the primitive ceremonies of religion. By the "nobility of Etruria the science of future events was "esteemed, and cultivated. The authority of the se- "nate gave additional sanctions, and those mysteries "have ever since remained in certain families, trans- "mitted from father to son. In the present decay of "all liberal science, and the growth of foreign super- "stition, the sacred mysteries are neglected, and, in- "deed, almost extinguished. The empire, it is true, "enjoys a state of perfect tranquillity; but, surely, for "that blessing, the people should bend in adoration to "the gods, not forgetting, in the calm season of "peace, those religious rites, which saved them in the "hour of danger." A decree passed the senate, di- recting that the pontiffs should revise the whole sys- tem, and retrench or ratify what to them should seem proper.

XVI. In the course of this year, the Cheruscans applied to Rome for a king to reign over them. They had been distracted by civil dissensions, and in the wars that followed, the flower of their nobility was cut off. Of royal descent there was only one surviving chief, by name Italicus, and he at that time resided at Rome. He was the son of Flavius, the brother of Arminius; by the maternal line, grandson to Catumer, the reigning king of the Cattians. He was comely in his person, expert in use of arms, and skilled in horse- manship, as well after the Roman manner, as the prac- tice of the Germans. Claudius supplied him with money; appointed guards to escort him; and, by sea-

sonable admonitions, endeavoured to inspire him with sentiments worthy of the elevation to which he was called. He desired him to go forth with courage, and ascend the throne of his ancestors with becoming dignity. He told him, that being born at Rome, and there entertained in freedom, not kept as a prisoner, he was the first, who went clothed with the character of a Roman citizen, to reign in Germany. The prince was received by his countrymen with demonstrations of joy. A stranger to the dissensions, which had for some time disturbed the public tranquillity, he had no party views to warp his conduct. The king of a people, not of a faction, he gained the esteem of all. His praise resounded in every quarter. By exercising the milder qualities of temperance and affability, and, at times, giving himself up to wine and gay carousals, which among barbarians are esteemed national virtues, he endeared himself to all ranks of men. His fame reached the neighbouring states, and by degrees spread all over Germany.

His popularity, however, gave umbrage to the disaffected. The same turbulent spirits, who had before thrown every thing into confusion, and flourished in the distractions of their country, began to view the new king with a jealous eye. They represented to the adjacent nations, that "the rights of Germany, "transmitted to them by their forefathers, were now "at the last gasp. The grandeur of the Roman em-"pire rises on the ruins of public liberty. But is the "Cheruscan nation at so low an ebb, that a native "worthy of the supreme authority, can not be found "amongst them? Is there no resource left, but that "of electing the son of Flavius, that ignominious spy, "that traitor to his country? It is in vain alleged in "favour of Italicus, that he is nephew to Arminius. "Were he the son of that gallant warrior, yet foster-"ed, as he has been, in the arms, and in the bosom of "Rome, he is, by that circumstance, unqualified to "reign in Germany. From a young man, educated "among our enemies, debased by servitude, and in-"fected with foreign manners, foreign laws, and fo-"reign sentiments, what have we to expect? And if

"this Roman king, this Italicus, inherits the spirit of "his father, let it be remembered, that Flavius took "the field against his kindred and the gods of Ger- "many. In the whole course of that war, no man "showed a spirit so determined; no man acted with "such envenomed hostility against the liberties of his "country."

XVII. By these, and such like incentives, the male-contents inflamed the minds of the people, and soon collected a numerous army. An equal number followed the standard of Italicus. "Their motives," they said, "were just and honourable: the young "king did not come to usurp the crown; he was in- "vited by the voice of a willing people. His birth was "illustrious, and it was but fair, to make an experi- "ment of his virtues. He might, perhaps, prove wor- "thy of Arminius, his uncle, and of Catumer, his "grandfather. Even for his father, the son had no rea- "son to blush. If Flavius adhered with fidelity to "the cause of Rome, he had bound himself by the "obligation of an oath; and that oath was taken with "the consent of the German nations. The sacred "name of liberty was used in vain to varnish the guilt "of pretended patriots; a set of men, in their private "characters, void of honour; in their public conduct, "destructive to the community; an unprincipled and "profligate party, who, by fair and honest means "having nothing to hope, looked for their private ad- "vantage, in the disasters of their country." To this reasoning the multitude assented with shouts of applause. The barbarians came to an action. After an obstinate engagement, victory declared for Italicus. Elate with success, he broke out into acts of cruelty, and was soon obliged to fly the country. The Langobards reinstated him in his dominions. From that time, Italicus continued to struggle with alternate vicissitudes of fortune, in success no less than adversity, the scourge of the Cheruscan nation.

XVIII. The Chaucians, at this time free from domestic broils, began to turn their arms against their neighbours. The death of Sanquinius, who commanded the legions in the lower Germany, furnished them

with an opportunity to invade the Roman provinces; and as Corbulo, who was appointed to succeed the deceased general, was still on his way, they resolved to strike their blow before his arrival. Gannascus, born among the Caninefates, headed the enterprise; a bold adventurer, who had formerly served among the auxiliaries in the Roman army. Having deserted afterwards, he provided himself with light-built shallops, and followed the life of a roving freebooter, infested chiefly the Gallic side of the Rhine, where he knew the wealth and unwarlike genius of the people. Corbula entered the province. In his first campaign he laid the foundation of that prodigious fame, which afterwards raised his character to the highest eminence. He ordered the strongest galleys to fall down the Rhine, and the small craft, according to their size and fitness for the service, to enter the æstuaries, and the recesses of the river. The boats and vessels of the enemy were sunk or otherwise destroyed. Gannascus was obliged to save himself by flight.

By these operations Corbulo restored tranquillity throughout the province. The re-establishment of military discipline was the next object of his attention. He found the legions relaxed in sloth, attentive to plunder, and active for no other end. In order to make a thorough reform, he gave out in orders, that no man should presume to quit his post, or venture to attack the enemy, on any pretence, without the command of his superior officer. The soldiers at the advanced station, the sentinels, and the whole army, performed every duty, both day and night, completely armed. Two of the men, it is said, were put to death, as an example to the rest; one, because he laboured at the trenches without his sword; and the other, for being armed with a dagger only; a severity, it must be acknowledged, strained too far, or, perhaps, not true in fact: but the rigid system, peculiar to Corbulo, might, with some colour of probability, give rise to the report. It may, however, be fairly inferred, that the commander, concerning whom a story like this could gain credit, was, in matters of moment, firm, decided, and inflexible.

XIX. By this plan of discipline, Corbulo struck a general terror through the army: but that terror had a twofold effect; it roused the Romans to a due sense of their duty, and repressed the ferocity of the barbarians. The Frisians, who, ever since their success against Lucius Apronius, remained in open or disguised hostility, thought it advisable, after giving hostages for their pacific temper, to accept a territory within the limits prescribed by Corbulo, and to submit to a mode of government, which he judged proper, consisting of an assembly in the nature of a senate, a body of magistrates, and a new code of laws. In order to bridle this people effectually, he built a fort in the heart of their country, and left it strongly garrisoned. In the mean time, he tried, by his emissaries, to draw over to his interest the leading chiefs of the Chaucian nation. Against Gannascus he did not scruple to act by stratagem. In the case of a deserter, who had violated all good faith, fraud and circumvention did not appear to him inconsistent with the dignity of the Roman name. Gannascus was cut off. His death inflamed the resentment of the Chaucians; nor was Corbulo unwilling to provoke a war. His conduct, however, though applauded at Rome by a great number, did not escape the censure of others. "Why enrage the enemy? If he failed in his attempt, "the commonwealth must feel the calamity: if crown-"ed with success, a general of high renown, under a "torpid and unwarlike prince, might prove a power-"ful and dangerous citizen." Claudius had no ambition to extend his dominions in Germany. He ordered the garrisons to be withdrawn, and the whole army to repass the Rhine.

XX. Corbulo had already marked out his camp in the enemy's country when the emperor's letters came to hand. The contents were unexpected. A crowd of reflections occurred to the general: he dreaded the displeasure of the prince; he saw the legions exposed to the derision of the barbarians, and in the opinion of the allies his own character degraded. He exclaimed with some emotion, *Happy the commanders who fought for the old republic!* Without a word more,

he sounded a retreat. And now, to hinder his men from falling again into sluggish inactivity, he ordered a canal, three-and-twenty miles in length, to be carried on between the Meuse and the Rhine, as a channel to receive the influx of the sea, and hinder the country from being laid under water. Claudius, in the mean time, allowed him the honour of triumphal ornaments: he granted the reward of military service, but prevented the merit of deserving it.

In a short time afterwards, Curtius Rufus obtained the same distinction: the service of this man was the discovery of a mine in the country of the Mattiaci, in which was opened a vein of silver, of little profit, and soon exhausted. The labour was severely felt by the legions: they were obliged to dig a number of sluices, and in subterraneous cavities to endure fatigues and hardships, scarce supportable in the open air. Weary of the labour, and finding that the same rigorous services were extended to other provinces, they contrived, with secrecy, to dispatch letters to the emperor, praying, that, when next he appointed a general, he would begin with granting him triumphal honours.

XXI. Curtius Rufus, according to some, was the son of a gladiator. For this I do not pretend to vouch. To speak of him with malignity is far from my intention, and to relate the truth is painful. He began the world in the train of a quæstor, whom he attended into Africa. In that station, while, to avoid the intense heat of the mid-day sun, he was sitting under a portico in the city of Adrumetum, the form of a woman, large beyond the proportions of the human shape, appeared before him. A voice at the same time, pronounced, "You, Rufus, are the favoured man, destined to come hereafter into this province with pro-consular authority." Inspired by the vision, he set out for Rome, where, by the interest of his friends, and his own intriguing genius, he first obtained the quæstorship. In a short time after, he aspired to the dignity of prætor; and, though opposed by competitors of distinguished rank, he succeeded by the suffrage of Tiberius. That emperor, to throw a veil over the mean extraction of his favourite candidate, shrewdly said,

"*Curtius Rufus seems to be a man sprung from himself.*" He lived to an advanced old age, growing gray in the base arts of servile adulation; to his superiors a fawning sycophant, to all beneath him proud and arrogant, and with his equals, surly, rude, and impracticable. At a late period of his life, he obtained the consular and triumphal ornaments, and finally, to verify the prediction, went proconsul into Africa, where he finished his days.

XXII. About this time Cneius Novius, a man of equestrian rank, was seized in the circle at the emperor's court, with a dagger concealed under his robe: his motives were unknown at the time, and never since discovered. When he lay stretched on the rack, he avowed his own desperate purpose, but, touching his accomplices, not a syllable could be extorted from him. Whether his silence was wilful obstinacy, or proceeded from his having no secret to discover, remains uncertain. During the same consulship, Publius Dolabella proposed a new regulation, requiring that a public spectacle of gladiators should be exhibited annually, at the expense of such as obtained the office of quæstor. In the early ages of the commonwealth, that magistracy was considered as the reward of virtue. The honours of the state lay open to every citizen who relied on his fair endeavours, and the integrity of his character. The difference of age created no incapacity. Men, in the prime of life, might be chosen consuls and dictators. The office of quæstor was instituted during the monarchy, as appears from the law CURIATA, which was afterwards put in force by Lucius Junius Brutus. The right of election was vested in the consuls, till, at last, it centered in the people at large: and, accordingly, we find that about sixty-three years after the expulsion of the Tarquins, Valerius Potius and Æmilius Mamercus were the first popular quæstors, created to attend the armies of the republic. The multiplicity of affairs increasing at Rome, two were added to act in a civil capacity. In process of time, when all Italy was reduced to subjection, and foreign provinces augmented the public revenue, the number of quæstors was doubled. Sylla

created twenty: he had transferred all judicial authority to the senate; and to fill that order with its proper complement was the object of his policy. The Roman knights, it is true, recovered their ancient jurisdiction; but even during those convulsions, and from that æra to the time we are speaking of, the quæstorship was either obtained by the merit and dignity of the candidates, or granted by the favour and free will of the people. It was reserved for Dolabella to make the election venal.

XXIII. Aulus Vitellius and Lucius Vipsanius were the next consuls. The mode of filling the vacancies in the senate became the subject of debate. The nobility of that part of Gaul styled GALLIA COMATA had for some time enjoyed the privilege of Roman citizens: on this occasion they claimed a right to the magistracy and all civil honours. The demand became the topic of public discussion, and in the prince's cabinet met with a strong opposition. It was there contended, "That Italy was not so barren of men, but "she could well supply the capital with fit and able "senators. In former times, the municipal towns and "provinces were content to be governed by their own "native citizens. That system was long established, "and there was no reason to condemn the practice of "the older republic. The history of that period pre-"sents a school of virtue. It is there that the models "of true glory are to be found; those models that "formed the Roman genius, and still excite the emu-"lation of posterity. Is it not enough that the Ve-"netians and Insubrians have forced their way into "the senate? Are we to see a deluge of foreigners "poured in upon us, as if the city were taken by "storm? What honours and what titles of distinc-"tion will, in that case, remain for the ancient no-"bility, the true genuine stock of the Roman empire? "And for the indigent senator of Latium what means "will then be left to advance his fortune, and support "his rank? All posts of honour will be the property "of wealthy intruders; a race of men, whose ances-"tors waged war against the very being of the repub-"lic: with fire and sword destroyed her armies; and

"finally laid siege to Julius Cæsar in the city of "Alesia. But these are modern instances: what shall "be said of the barbarians, who laid the walls of Rome "in ashes, and dared to besiege the capitol and the "temple of Jupiter? Let the present claimants, if it "must be so, enjoy the titular dignity of Roman citi- "zens; but let the senatorian rank, and the honours "of the magistracy, be preserved, unmixed, untainted, "and inviolate."

XXIV. These arguments made no impression on the mind of Claudius: he replied on the spot, and afterwards in the senate delivered himself to this effect: "To decide the question now depending, the annals "of Rome afford a precedent; and a precedent of "greater cogency, as it happened to the ancestors of "my own family. Attus Clausus, by birth a Sa- "bine, from whom I derive my pedigree, was admit- "ted, on one and the same day, to the freedom of "Rome, and the patrician rank. Can I do better than "adopt that rule of ancient wisdom? It is for the in- "terest of the commonwealth, that merit, wherever "found, should be transplanted to Rome and made "our own. Need I observe that to Alba we are in- "debted for the Julii, to Camerium for the Carrun- "cani, and to Tusculum for the Portii? Without "searching the records of antiquity, we know that the "nobles of Etruria, of Lucania, and in short, of all Ita- "ly, have been incorporated with the Roman senate. "The Alps, in the course of time, were made the boun- "daries of the city: and by that extension of our pri- "vileges, not simple individuals but whole nations "were naturalized at once, and blended with the Ro- "man name. In a period of profound peace, the peo- "ple beyond the Po were admitted to their freedom. "Under colour of planting colonies, we spread our "legions over the face of the globe; and, by drawing "into our civil union the flower of the several pro- "vinces, we recruited the strength of the mother "country. The Balbi came from Spain, and others "of equal eminence from the Narbon Gaul: of that "accession to our numbers have we reason to repent? "The descendants of those illustrious families are still

"in being: and can Rome boast of better citizens? "Where do we see more generous ardour to promote "her interest?"

"The Spartans and Athenians, without all question, acquired great renown in arms: to what shall "we attribute their decline and total ruin? To what "but the injudicious policy of considering the vanquished as aliens to their country? The conduct "of Romulus, the founder of Rome, was the very reverse: with wisdom equal to his valour, he made "those fellow citizens at night, who, in the morning, "were his enemies in the field. Even foreign kings "have reigned at Rome. To raise the descendants "of freedmen to the honours of the state, is not, as "some imagine, a modern innovation: it was the "practice of the old republic. But the Senones waged "war against us: and were the Volscians and the "Æqui always our friends? The Gauls, we are told, "well nigh overturned the capitol; and did not the "Tuscans oblige us to deliver hostages? Did not the "Samnites compel a Roman army to pass under the "yoke? Review the wars that Rome had upon her "hands, and that with the Gauls will be found the "shortest. From that time, a lasting and an honourable "peace prevailed. Let them now intermix with the "Roman people, united by ties of affinity, by arts, "and congenial manners, be one people with us. Let "them bring their wealth to Rome, rather than hoard "it up for their own separate use. The institutions of "our ancestors, which we so much and so justly revere at present, were, at one time, a novelty in the "constitution. The magistrates were, at first, patricians only; the plebeians opened their way to honours; and the Latins in a short time followed their "example. In good time we embraced all Italy. The "measure which I now defend by examples will, at a "future day, be another precedent. It is now a new "regulation: in time it will be history."

XXV. This speech was followed by a decree, in consequence of which the Æduans, by way of distinction, were, in the first instance, declared capable of a seat in the senate. Of all the Gauls, they alone were

styled the brethren of the Roman people, and by their strict fidelity deserved the honour conferred upon them. About the same time, Claudius enrolled in the patrician order such of the ancient senators as stood recommended by their illustrious birth, and the merit of their ancestors. The line of those families, which were styled by Romulus the FIRST CLASS OF NOBILITY, and by Brutus the SECOND, was almost extinct. Even those of more recent date, created in the time of Julius Cæsar by the CASSIAN LAW, and under Augustus, by the SENIAN, were well nigh exhausted. This new distribution of honours was agreeable to the people, and this part of his censorial office Claudius performed with alacrity. A more difficult business still remained. Some of the senators had brought dishonour on their names; and to expel them, according to the severity of ancient usage, was a painful task. He chose a milder method. "Let each man," he said, "review "his own life and manners; and, if he sees reason, let "him apply for leave to erase his name. Permission "will of course be granted. The list which he intend-"ed to make, would contain, without distinction, "those who retired of their own motion, and also "such as deserved to be expelled. By that method, "the disgrace of being degraded would be avoided, "or, at least, alleviated."

For these several acts, Vipsanius the consul moved that the emperor should be styled THE FATHER OF THE SENATE. The title, he said, of FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY would be no more than common; but peculiar merit required a new distinction. This stroke of flattery gave disgust to Claudius. He therefore overruled the motion. He then closed the lustre of five years, and made a survey of the people. The number of citizens amounted nearly to six millions. From this time the emperor no longer remained in stupid insensibility, blind to the conduct of his wife. He was soon reduced to the necessity of hearing and punishing the enormity of her guilt: but the act by which he vindicated his own honour, gave him an opportunity to sully it by an incestuous marriage.

XXVI. Messalina had hitherto found so ready

compliance with her vicious passions, that the cheap delight was grown insipid. To give a zest to pleasure, she had recourse to modes of gratification untried before. Silius, at the same time, intoxicated with success, or, perhaps, thinking that the magnitude of his danger was to be encountered with equal courage, made a proposal altogether new and daring. "They "were not," he said, "in a situation to wait, with pa- "tience, for the death of the prince. Prudence and "cautious measures were for the innocent only. In "cases of flagrant guilt, a bold effort of courage was "the only remedy. If they undertook with spirit, "their accomplices, apprised of their situation, would "be ready to hazard all that was dear to them. As to "himself, he was divorced from his wife; he was a "single man; he had no children; he was willing to "marry Messalina, and adopt Britannicus for his son. "After the nuptial ceremony, the power which Mes- "salina then enjoyed would still continue in her "hands, unimpaired, and undiminished. To insure "their mutual safety, nothing remained but to circum- "vent a superannuated emperor,—when unprovoked, "stupid; but when roused from his lethargy, sudden, "furious, and vindictive." The proposition was not relished by Messalina. Motives of conjugal affection had no influence on her conduct; but she beheld her lover with a jealous eye. Raised to imperial dignity, he might despise an adulteress, and their guilty joys. Their mutual pleasures, endeared at present by the magnitude of the crime and the danger, might, in the day of security, appear in their native colours, and pall the sated appetite. The marriage, notwithstanding, had charms that pleased her fancy. It was a further step in guilt and infamy; and infamy, when beyond all measure great, is the last incentive of an abandoned mind. She closed with the offer made by Silius, but deferred the carrying of it into execution, till the emperor went to Ostia to assist at a sacrifice. During his absence, the nuptial ceremony was performed with pomp, and all the accustomed rites.

XXVII. The fact which I have stated, it must be acknowledged, carries with it an air of fable. That

such a degree of self-delusion, in a populous city where every thing is known and discussed in public, should infatuate the mind of any person whatever, will hardly gain credit with posterity. Much less will it be believed, that a consul elect, and the wife of an emperor, on a day appointed, in the presence of witnesses duly summoned, should dare to meet the public eye, and sign a contract with express provisions for the issue of an unlawful marriage. It will be a circumstance still more incredible, that the empress should hear the marriage ceremony pronounced by the augur, and, in her turn, repeat the words; that she should join in a sacrifice to the gods; take her place at the nuptial banquet; exchange caresses and mutual endearments with the bridegroom, and retire with him to the consummation of connubial joys. The whole must appear romantic; but to amuse with fiction is not the design of this work. The facts here related are well attested by writers of that period, and by grave and elderly men, who lived at the time, and were informed of every circumstance.

XXVIII. The prince's family was thrown into consternation. The favourites who stood high in power were alarmed for themselves. Full of apprehensions, and dreading a sudden change, they disclosed their minds, not in secret murmurs, but openly, and in terms of indignation. "While a stage-player enjoyed "the embraces of Messalina, the emperor's bed was "dishonoured, but the state was not in danger. At "present, what had they not to fear from a young "man of the first nobility, endowed with talents and "vigour of mind, in his person graceful, and at that "very time, designed for the consulship? Silius was "preparing to open a new scene. The solemn farce "of a marriage has been performed, and the catas-"trophe, with which they intend to conclude the "piece, may be easily foreseen." Their fears were still increased, when they considered the stupidity of Claudius, and the ascendant which the empress had obtained over him, to such a degree, that the best blood in Rome had been spilt to gratify her insatiate vengeance. On the other hand, the imbecility of Clau-

dius gave them hopes of success. If they could once impress that torpid mind with an idea of Messalina's wickedness, she might be condemned unheard, and, by the sudden violence of the emperor, hurried away to execution. The only danger was, that she might gain an audience. Her defence might satisfy the emperor; and, even if she confessed her guilt, he might remain deaf to the truth, insensible of disgrace, weak, stupid, and uxorious.

XXIX. Callistus, who as already mentioned, was a principal actor in the catastrophe of Caligula, held a meeting with Narcissus, the chief adviser of the murder of Appius, and with Pallas, the reigning favourite at the court of Claudius. Their first idea was, to address themselves at once to Messalina, and, without alluding to her other enormous practices, endeavour to break the connexion between her and Silius. This plan was soon deserted. The danger of provoking the haughty spirit of Messalina operated on the fears of Pallas. Callistus knew his own interest too well: a politician formed by the maxims of the preceding reign, he was not then to learn that power at court is preserved by tame compliance, not by honest counsels. Narcissus was left to act from his own judgment. To ruin Messalina was his fixed resolution; but the blow, he knew, must be struck before she could see the hand that aimed it. He laid his train with the deepest secrecy. Claudius continued loitering away the time at Ostia. Callistus employed the interval to the best advantage. He engaged in his plot two famous courtesans, at that time high in favour with the emperor. He allured them by presents and liberal promises. He convinced them both, that by the ruin of Messalina they might rise to power and influence. He represented their interest in the strongest colours, and, by those incentives, induced them to prefer an accusation against the empress.

XXX. The plot being settled, one of the concubines (by name Calpurnia) obtained a private interview with Claudius. Throwing herself at the emperor's feet, she told him that Messalina had dishonoured him by a marriage with Silius. Cleopatra, the other

actress in the scene, was near at hand, to confirm the story. Being asked by the accuser whether she did not know the truth of the charge, her testimony confirmed the whole. Narcissus was immediately summoned to the emperor's presence. He began with an humble apology for the remissness of his conduct. "He had been silent as to Vectius and Plautius, "whose criminal intrigues were too well known. "Even in that very moment it was not his intention "to urge the crime of adultery; nor would he desire "restitution of the palace, the household train, and "the splendours of the imperial house. Let Silius en- "joy them all; but let him restore the emperor's wife, "and give up his marriage contract to be declared "null and void. You are divorced, Cæsar, at this mo- "ment divorced, and are you ignorant of it? The "people saw the marriage ceremony, the senate be- "held it, and the soldiers know it. Act with vigour; "take a decisive step, or the adulterer is master of "Rome."

XXXI. Claudius called a council of his friends. Turranius, the superintendant of the public stores, and Lucius Geta, the commander of the prætorian bands, acknowledged the whole of her flagitious conduct. The rest of the courtiers crowded round the prince, with importunity urging him to go forth to the camp, and secure the prætorian guards. His own personal safety was the first consideration. Vindictive measures might follow in good time. The alarm was too much for the faculties of so weak a man as Claudius. He stood in stupid amazement. He asked several times, Am I emperor? Is Silius still a private man?

Messalina, in the mean time, passed the hours in gay festivity, all on the wing of pleasure and enjoyment. It was then the latter end of autumn: in honour of the season, an interlude, representing the vintage, was exhibited by her order at the palace. The wine-presses were set to work; the juice pressed from the grape flowed in copious streams, and round the vats a band of women, dressed after the Bacchanalian fashion, with the skins of tigers, danced in frolic measures, with the wild transport usual at

the rites of Bacchus. In the midst of the revellers Messalina displayed the graces of her person, her hair flowing with artful negligence, and a thyrsus waving in her hand. Silius fluttered at her side; his temples crowned with wreaths of ivy, his legs adorned with buskins, and his head, with languishing airs, moving in unison with the music, while a chorus circled round the happy pair, with dance, and song, and lascivious gesture animating the scene. There is a current tradition, that Vectius Valens in a fit of ecstacy climbed up among the branches of a tree, and being asked what he saw, made answer, "I see *a dreadful* "*storm* gathering at Ostia." Whether the sky was then overcast, or the expression fell by chance, it proved in the end a true prediction.

XXXII. Meanwhile, it became publickly known at Rome, not by vague report, but by sure intelligence brought by special messengers, that Claudius, fully apprised of all that passed, was on his way, determined to do justice on the guilty. Messalina withdrew to the gardens of Lucullus. Silius, endeavouring under an air of gaiety to hide his fears, went towards the forum, as if he had business to transact. The rest of the party fled with precipitation. The centurions pursued them. Several were seized in the streets, or in their lurking places, and loaded with fetters. In this reverse of fortune, Messalina had no time for deliberation. She resolved to meet the emperor on his way, and in a personal interview, to try that power over his affections which had so often served her on former occasions. In order to excite compassion, she ordered her children, Octavia and Britannicus, to fly to the embraces of their father. She prevailed on Vibidia, the eldest of the vestal virgins, to address the emperor as the sovereign pontiff, and wring from him, by the force of prayers, a pardon for his wife. She herself traversed the city on foot, with only three attendants. Such, in the moment of adversity, was the solitude in which she was left. She mounted into a tumbrel, usually employed to carry off the refuse of the city-gardens, and in that vehicle proceeded on her way to Ostia. From the

spectators not a groan was heard; no sign of pity was seen. The enormity of her guilt suppressed every kind emotion of the heart.

XXXIII. Claudius, in the mean time, was thrown into violent agitations. Doubt and fear distracted him. He had no reliance on Geta, who commanded the prætorian guards; a man at all times fluctuating between good and evil, and ready for any mischief. Narcissus, seconded by his friends and associates, spoke his mind in terms plain and direct. He told the emperor that all was lost, if the command of the camp were not, for that day, vested in one of his freedmen. He offered himself for that important office; and lest Claudius on the road to Rome should be induced, by the influence of Lucius Vitellius and Publius Largius Cæcina, to alter his resolution, he desired to be conveyed in the same carriage with the prince. He mounted the vehicle, and took his place without further ceremony.

XXXIV. Claudius, as he proceeded towards the city, felt himself distracted by contending passions. He inveighed against his wife; he softened into tenderness, and felt for his children. During all that agitation of mind, Vitellius, we are told, contented himself with saying, "The vile iniquity! The infa-"mous crime!" Narcissus pressed him to be more explicit; but his answers were in the oracular style, dark, ambiguous, and liable to be interpreted various ways. Cæcina followed his example. It was not long before Messalina appeared in sight. Her supplications were loud and vehement. "Hear your unhappy wife," she said, "hear the mother of Octavia and Britanni-"cus." To prevent any impression of tenderness, the accuser raised his voice: he talked of Silius, and the wickedness of the marriage; he produced a memorial, containing a full account of the whole proceeding, and, to draw the emperor's eyes from Messalina, gave him the papers to read. As they entered Rome, Octavia and Britannicus presented themselves before the prince; but, by order of Narcissus, they were both removed. Vibidia claimed to be heard: in a pathetic tone she remonstrated, that to condemn his wife

unheard, would be unjust, and shocking to humanity. She received for answer, that Messalina would have her opportunity to make her defence: in the mean time, it became a vestal virgin to retire to the functions of her sacred office.

XXXV. The silence of Claudius, during the whole of this scene, was beheld with astonishment. Vitellius looked aghast, affecting to understand nothing. All directions were given by the freedman. He ordered the adulterer's house to be thrown open, and proceeded thither with the emperor. He showed him in the vestibule the statue of Silius, the father, which the senate had ordered to be destroyed; he pointed to the splendid ornaments, formerly the property of the Neros and the Drusi, now in the possession of the adulterer; the reward of his profligacy. Claudius was fired with indignation. Before he had time to cool, and while, with violent menaces, he was denouncing vengeance, Narcissus took advantage of the moment, and conducted him to the camp. The soldiers were assembled in a body to receive him. Claudius, by the advice of his ministers, delivered a short harangue. On the subject of his disgrace it was impossible to expatiate; shame suppressed his voice. The camp resounded with rage and clamour. The soldiers called aloud for the names of the guilty, threatening immediate vengeance. Silius was brought before the tribunal. He attempted no defence; he asked for no delay; instant death was all he desired. Several Roman knights followed his example, with equal firmness wishing to end their misery. In the number were Titius Proculus, whom Silius had appointed to guard Messalina; Vectius Valens, who confessed his guilt, and offered to give evidence against others; Pompeius Urbicus, and Saufellus Trogus: by the emperor's order they were hurried to instant execution. The same fate attended Decius Calpurnianus, præfect of the night-watch; Sulpicius Rufus, director of the public games; and Juncus Virgilianus, a member of the senate.

XXXVI. Mnester was the only person, in whose favour Claudius was held in suspense. This man, in agony, tore his garments, and "Behold," he said, "be-

"hold a body seamed with stripes. Remember your "own words, Cæsar, the words, in which you gave me "strict directions to obey the will and pleasure of "Messalina. The rest acted for their reward; they had "bright objects in view. If I have erred, I erred through "necessity, not by inclination. Had Silius seized the "reins of government, I should have been the first vic-"tim to his fury." Claudius hesitated: touched with compassion, he was on the point of granting the wretch his pardon: but after executing so many persons of illustrious rank, his freedman told him, that the life of a minstrel was of no value: whether the man offended from inclination or compulsion, was not worth a moment's pause: his case deserved no favour. The defence made by Traulus Montanus, a Roman knight, availed him nothing. In the prime of youth, of ingenuous manners, and an elegant figure, he had the misfortune to be distinguished by Messalina. She invited him to her bed, and, after one night, dismissed him from her service. Such was the caprice that ruled all her passions: she loved with fury, and was soon disgusted. A pardon was granted to Suillius Cæsonius and Plautius Lateranus: the last, in consideration of the great merit of his uncle, was saved from execution. Cæsonius was protected by his vices. In that lewd society, with whom he had been lately connected, he had been obliged to suffer unnatural indignities: and that disgrace was deemed sufficient punishment.

XXXVII. Messalina remained, during the whole time, in the gardens of Lucullus. She still entertained hopes of prolonging her days. She began to write to the emperor in a style of supplication; her passions shifted, and she spoke the language of reproach: even in ruin, her pride was not abated. If Narcissus had not hastened the execution, there is no doubt but the blow, aimed at her, would have recoiled upon himself. Claudius, as soon as he returned to his palace, placed himself at his convivial table. Being refreshed, and in a short time warm with wine, he gave orders that a messenger should be sent to tell the unhappy woman (those were his words,) that on the next day she should be admit-

ted to make her defence. Narcissus took the alarm: he saw the resentments of his master ebbing fast away, and his former fondness flowing in upon him. Delay was big with danger. The night, then coming on apace, might produce a change of sentiment; and his very bed-chamber, the scene of all his happiness, might melt him into tenderness and conjugal affection. Filled with these apprehensions, the freedman rushed out of the banqueting-room, and, in the emperor's name, gave orders to the centurions, and the tribune on duty, to do immediate execution on Messalina. Evodus, one of the freedmen, was sent to superintend the execution. This man made the best of his way to the gardens. He found the empress stretched on the ground, and Lepida, her mother, sitting by her. While Messalina flourished in prosperity, the mother kept no terms with her daughter. In her present distress, she felt the regret and anguish of a parent. "Death," she told the unhappy criminal, "was her only refuge. "To linger for the stroke of the executioner were un- "worthy and ignoble. Life with her was over: she "was in the last act, and nothing remained but to "close the scene with dignity and a becoming spirit." But in a mind like that of Messalina, depraved by vicious passions, every virtue was extinguished; she sunk under her afflictions, overwhelmed with grief, dissolved in tears, and uttering vain complaints, when the garden-gate was thrown open. The tribune presented himself in sullen silence. Evodus, the freedman, discharged a torrent of opprobious language, with all the malice of a servile spirit.

XXXVIII. Messalina was now, for the first time, sensible of her condition. She saw that all was lost; she received a poniard; she aimed it with a feeble effort at her throat; she pointed it at her breast, irresolute, and clinging still to life. The tribune despatched her at one blow. Her body was left to be disposed of by her mother. The emperor, in the mean time, had not risen from the table. He was told that Messalina was no more; but whether she died by her own hand, or that of the executioner, was not mentioned, nor did it occur to him to ask the question. He called for wine

and pampered himself, as usual, with the luxuries of the table. On the following days he appeared unmoved, unaltered, without a symptom of anger, joy, or grief, or any one sensation of the human heart. Even amidst the exultations of Messalina's enemies, and the cries of her children, lamenting their unhappy mother, he remained sunk in stupid apathy. In order to blot her altogether from his memory, the senate decreed, that her name should be effaced in all places, whether public or private, and that her images should be every where taken down. The ensigns of the quæstorian dignity were voted to Narcissus; a slender recompense, when it is considered, that, though second in rank to Pallas and Callistus, he was the chief adviser in the whole proceeding against Messalina. The punishment inflicted, by his means, was undoubtedly just; but it proved the source of numberless crimes, and a long train of public calamity.

THE

ANNALS OF TACITUS.

BOOK XII.

I. The death of Messalina threw the imperial family into a state of distraction. The freedmen were divided into contending factions. The emperor disliked a life of celibacy, and the uxorious disposition of his nature made him liable to be governed by the partner of his bed. Which of the favourites should make the fortune of a future empress, was the point in dispute. Nor was female ambition less excited. Several candidates aspired to the vacant throne, all depending on pretensions, that gave to each a decided title; such as nobility of birth, superior beauty, immoderate riches, and in short, every claim to that great elevation. The contest, however, lay between Lollia Paulina, the daughter of Marcus Lollius, the consul, and Agrippina, the immediate issue of Germanicus. Pallas espoused the cause of Agrippina, and Lollia was supported by Callistus. There was still a third rival, namely, Ælia Petina, descended from the family of the Tuberos. Narcissus declared in her favour. By the jarring counsels of the three favourites, Claudius was distracted in his choice; by turns inclined to each, persuaded always by the last, yet determined by none. At length, to weigh their different propositions, and the reasonings in support of them, he called his confidential ministers to an audience.

II. Narcissus urged in favour of Ælia Petina, that she was formerly the wife of Claudius, and by him was the mother of Antonia. By joining her again in the bands of wedlock, no alteration would be made in the imperial family. A person, with whom the prince had already experienced the tenderest union, would be re-

instated; and, since Octavia and Britannicus were so nearly allied to her daughter, she would embrace them both with sincere affection, free from the little jealousies of a step-mother. Callistus, on the contrary, was of opinion, that a woman, disgraced by a long divorce, and suddenly restored to favour, would bring with her the pride and arrogance of an actual conquest: but to Lollia no objection could be made: she had never been a mother, and, by consequence, her affections, not already engaged, would be reserved for the issue of the prince. Her whole stock of tenderness would be engrossed by Octavia and Britannicus. Pallas contended for Agrippina: by a match with her, the grandson of Germanicus would be transplanted into the imperial family, and that union would be an accession of strength to the Claudian line. Agrippina was still in the prime of life, of a constitution that promised a numerous issue; and to suffer a woman of her rank and dignity to carry the splendour of the Cæsarian line into another family, would be a measure highly impolitic.

III. This reasoning weighed with Claudius, and the beauty of Agrippina added force to the argument. She had, besides, the art of displaying her charms to the best advantage. The ties of consanguinity gave her free access to her uncle. She made use of her opportunities, and, in a short time, secured her conquest. Without waiting for the marriage rites, she was able to anticipate the splendour and authority of imperial grandeur. Sure of her triumph over her rival, she enlarged her views, and by a projected match between Domitius, her son by Cneius Ænobarbus, and Octavia, the emperor's daughter, began to plan the elevation of her family. The scene before her flattered her ambition, but without a stroke of iniquity could not be realized. The fact was, Octavia, with the consent of Claudius, was contracted to Lucius Silanus, a youth of noble descent, by triumphal honours rendered still more illustrious, and by a spectacle of gladiators, given in his name, endeared to the people. But to a woman of high ambition and a politic character it was not difficult to mould to her purposes a man

like Claudius, void of sentiment, without a passion, and without a motive, except what was infused by the suggestion of others.

IV. Vitellius saw the tide running with a rapid current in favour of Agrippina. He resolved to ingratiate himself without delay. His office of censor gave him the power of executing the vilest purposes, and, at the same time, served as a veil to hide his iniquity. He made advances to Agrippina, and entered into all her measures. His first step was to frame an accusation against Silanus, whose sister, Junia Calvina, in her person elegant, but of a loose and lascivious character, had been, not long before, the daughter-in-law of Vitellius. He accused them both of an incestuous commerce. The charge, in truth, was without foundation; but the folly of a brother and sister, who were so unguarded as to give to natural affection an air of criminality, afforded colour for the imputation. Claudius listened to the story. Inclined to protect his daughter, he was easily incensed against an intended husband, who had shown himself capable of so foul a crime. Silanus was, at that time, prætor for the year. He little suspected the treacherous arts, by which his character and his fortune were undermined. By an unexpected edict, issued by Vitellius, he was expelled the senate, though that assembly had been lately reviewed and registered by the censor. Claudius declared the marriage contract void; he renounced all ties of affinity with Silanus, and obliged him to abdicate the prætorship, though but a single day remained to complete the year. For that short interval, Epirus Marcellus was appointed to fill the vacant office.

V. In the consulship of Caius Pomponius Longinus and Quintus Veranius, the fond endearments that passed between the emperor and his niece, left no room to doubt but their criminal loves, most probably indulged already, would soon be followed by the nuptial ceremony. But the marriage of an uncle with his brother's daughter, was at that time without a precedent. If they vowed an incestuous marriage, the popular hatred might be inflamed against them, and some public calamity might befall the city of Rome.

Claudius was held in suspense. Vitellius undertook to remove every scruple. He desired to know whether the emperor would make the sense of the people, and the authority of the senate, the rule of his conduct. Claudius replied that he was one of the people, an individual too weak to resist the public voice. Vitellius desired that he would remain in his palace, and went directly to the senate. He began with assuring the fathers that he came on business of the first importance, and having obtained leave to speak out of his turn, he proceeded as follows; "The office of "supreme magistrate is at best a state of painful soli- "citude. The cares of a prince, who superintends the "government of the world, requires domestic comfort "to sweeten anxiety, and leave him at leisure to think "for the good of the whole. And where can he find "a comfort so fit, so honourable, so consistent with "his dignity, as in the arms of his wife, his partner "in prosperity, and in affliction the balm of all his "cares? With a faithful associate, he may unload his "inmost thoughts; to her he may commit the manage- "ment of his children; and in that tender union, un- "seduced by pleasure, undebauched by riot and luxu- "ry, he may continue to show that reverence for the "laws, which distinguished the character of Claudius "from his earliest youth."

VI. After this artful introduction, finding that he was heard by the fathers with manifest symptoms of a complying spirit, he resumed his discourse. "Since "it seems to be the prevailing opinion, that to allevi- "ate the cares of the emperor, an imperial consort is "absolutely necessary, nothing remains but to recom- "mend the choice of a person, distinguished by her "illustrious birth, a fruitful womb, and the purity of "her morals. This point may be soon decided. Agrip- "pina must, of course, present herself to every mind. "Descended from a noble stock, she is the mother of "children, and possesses, besides, all the virtues and "all the graces of her sex. Nor is this all: by the spe- "cial care of the gods, a prince, who has known no "lawless pleasures, who has sought the modest enjoy- "ments of connubial love, has now an opportunity of

"taking a widow to his arms, without injury to any "private citizen, and without violating the rights "of the marriage bed. By former emperors wives "have been taken from the embraces of their hus- "bands: we have heard it from our fathers; we have "been eye-witnesses of the fact. But these acts of "violence are now at an end. A precedent may be "established to regulate the conduct of all future em- "perors. But it may be said, a marriage between "the uncle and his niece is unknown to Roman man- "ners. To this the answer is obvious: it is the prac- "tice of foreign nations, and no law forbids it. By the "rule of ancient times, cousin-germans were restrain- "ed from marrying; but the change of manners has "introduced a different custom. Such marriages are "now grown familiar. Public convenience is the pa- "rent of all civil institutions: the marriage, which to- "day seems an innovation, in future times will be the "general practice."

VII. This speech was received with the general assent. Many of the fathers rushed out of the house, declaring aloud, that if the emperor hesitated, they knew how to enforce compliance. The populace at the door echoed back the voice of the senate, and, with violent uproar, called it the wish of the people. Claudius delayed no longer: he showed himself in the forum amidst shouts and acclamations. He proceeded to the senate, and there desired that a decree might pass, declaring marriages between the uncle and niece legal for the future. The law was enacted, but little relished. Titus Alledius Severus, a Roman knight, was the only person willing to embrace such an alliance, He married his niece, but, as was generally believed, with a design to pay his court to Agrippina. From this time a new scene of affairs was opened. The government of a woman prevailed; but it was no longer a woman of loose and dissolute manners like Messsalina, who meant to mock the people with a reign of lewdness and debauchery. Agrippina established a despotic system, and maintained it with the vigour of a manly spirit: in her public conduct rigorous, and often arrogant, she suffered no irregularity

in her domestic management. Vice, when subservient to her schemes of ambition, might be the means, but never was her ruling passion. Her avarice knew no bounds: but the support of government was her pretext.

VIII. On the day of the nuptial ceremony, Silanus put an end to his life. Till that time he had nourished delusive hopes; or, it might be his intention to mark the day by a deed of horror. His sister Calvina was banished out of Italy. Claudius, to atone for her offence, revived the ancient law of Tullus, the Roman king, and ordered a sacrifice and expiations by the pontiffs to be made in the grove of Diana. This provoked the public ridicule. It was observed that the time of inflicting penalties, and performing solemn rites, was chosen with notable judgment, when adultery was by law established. Agrippina was not willing to be distinguished by evil deeds alone: in order to grace her character, she interceded for Annæus Seneca, who had been driven into banishment; and not only restored him to his country, but obtained for him the prætorian rank. The learning and brilliant genius of that philosopher, she had no doubt, would render the measure acceptable to the people; and, from the education of her son Domitius under such a master, she promised herself great advantages. She had still a deeper scheme in view: by the wisdom and advice of Seneca, she hoped to make the road to empire smooth and level for her son. Motives of gratitude would have their influence on the mind of that eminent man, and fix him in her interest, a faithful counsellor, and her friend by sentiment; while a sense of former injuries would make him the secret enemy of Claudius.

IX. Having conceived this plan of ambition, she thought her measures could not be too soon concerted. She contrived, by large and generous promises, to gain over to her purposes Memmius Pollio, at that time consul elect. He moved in the senate an address to the emperor, requesting his consent to a contract of marriage between Domitius and Octavia. The match was suited to the age of the parties. Agrippina in-

'ended it as a prelude to greater scenes, not yet disclosed. The speech of Pollio to the fathers was little more than a repetition of what had been urged by Vitellius. The motion succeeded. Octavia was promised to Domitius, and, by this additional tie, the young prince was raised to higher splendour. He was now considered as the son-in-law of the emperor. Supported by the intrigues of his mother, and not less by the enemies of Messalina, who dreaded the vengeance of her son, he began to vie with Britannicus, and even to dispute with him the point of precedence.

X. The deputies from Parthia sent, as has been related, to demand Meherdates for their king, were admitted to an audience before the senate. They opened their commission in the following manner: "The alliance between Rome and Parthia, and the subsisting "treaties, are fully known to us; nor is it a spirit of "disaffection to the family of the Arsacides that brings "us to this assembly. We seek the son of Vonones, "the grandson of Phraates. In the present crisis, he "is our only refuge, our shield and best protection "from the tyranny of Gotarzes, who is justly execrated by the whole Parthian nation. His reign is marked with blood. His brothers were the first victims "to his fury. His kindred have been since cut off. No "place is safe from devastation: neither age nor sex is "spared; parents and their children perish in one general massacre, and infants yet unborn are butchered "in the mother's womb. Such are the exploits of Gotarzes; in peace a tyrant, and in war disastrous to "his country. Cruelty, he hopes, will seem in the eyes "of men a warlike spirit. The treaties subsisting between Rome and Parthia are of ancient date: they "have been the basis of a lasting friendship; and "to prove that friendship sincere, the fathers have now "a fair opportunity. It is theirs to vindicate the rights "of a nation, which, though not inferior in point of "strength and numbers, yields to Rome from motives "of respect. For this reason the sons of Parthian kings "have been delivered up as hostages. The principle "of that acquiescence is, that if domestic tyranny "should prove a galling yoke, the people may have

"recourse to the emperor and the senate. They now "claim, at your hands, a king trained up in Roman "manners, and, by consequence, likely to bring with "him to his native country the best notions of civil "government."

XI. Claudius answered the ambassadors in a style of magnificence. He set forth the grandeur of the Roman name, and the deference due from the Parthian nation. He placed himself on a level with Augustus, who, in like manner, had received the applications of a whole people; but he made no mention of Tiberius, though that emperor had dealt out sceptres, and placed foreign kings on the throne of Parthia. After this brilliant harangue, he turned to Meherdates, then present in the senate, and in a serious strain admonished him to remember that he was going forth, not the lord of slaves, but the governor of men; not the tyrant, but the chief magistrate of his fellow citizens. He advised him to practice the virtues of justice and moderation; virtues, he said, unknown to savage life, but for that reason more likely to charm by their novelty. From the prince he turned to the Parthian ambassadors, and, in handsome terms, commended to their care the pupil of Rome; a young prince of ingenuous manners, and no stranger to the liberal arts. He added, that the Parthians would do well to temporize with the genius of their kings, and to overlook the failings of human nature. Frequent revolutions could give no solid advantage. Rome was at the highest point of grandeur. Enough of glory had been gained by the progress of her arms; she therefore put a period to her victories, and the tranquillity of foreign nations was now the object of her care. Meherdates was committed to the Parthian deputies; and Caius Cassius, the governor of Syria, had it in command to conduct him to the banks of the Euphrates.

XII. Cassius, at that period, was the most eminent man of the age for his profound knowledge of the laws. In times of peace, the military science falls into neglect. Between the warlike genius and the inactive sluggard no distinction remains. And yet the ardent mind of Cassius could not languish in a state of stupid

indolence. Though there was no war upon his hands to rouse the spirit of the legions, he resolved, by every method in his power, to maintain the rigour of ancient discipline. He kept the soldiers in constant exercise; he established new regulations, and practised every duty with as much zeal as if the enemy were actually in arms against him. This severity, he thought, became a man who had before his eyes the bright example of his ancestors, and, above all, the fame of the celebrated Cassius, which was diffused through all the eastern nations. Having pitched his camp near Zeugma, a city where the passage over the Euphrates is most practicable, he waited for a convention of the Parthian chiefs, who had made their application to Rome. As soon as they arrived, and with them Abgarus, king of the Arabs, he delivered Meherdates into their hands, having previously reminded the prince, that among barbarians the first impulse of their zeal is violent, but apt to relax, and end in treachery. His interest, therefore, called for vigorous measures. By the artifice of Abgarus that advice was rendered abortive. The prince, as yet without experience, suspecting no deceit, and weak enough to think that royalty consists in luxury and riot, was seduced to the city of Edessa, and there detained several days, the dupe of the wily Arabian. Carrhenes, in the mean time, pressed Meherdates to advance with expedition. By his messengers he promised certain success, if no time was lost in frivolous delay. All was ineffectual. Though Mesopotamia was at hand, they never entered that country; but, taking a wider circuit, marched towards Armenia, where the rigour of the winter was already begun.

XIII. After a toilsome march over craggy mountains covered with a waste of snow, they descended at last into the open country. Carrhenes joined them at the head of his forces. Thus reinforced, the army passed over the Tigris, and penetrated into the country of the Adiabenians. Izates, king of that people, in outward show favoured Meherdates, but in his heart inclined to Gotarzes. In the course of their march, they made themselves masters of the city of

Ninos, formerly the seat of the Assyrian monarchy. They also took the castle of ARBELA, memorable in story for the last battle between Darius and Alexander, by which the fate of the Persian monarchy was decided. Gotarzes, in the mean time, took post on the heights of mount SAMBULOS. He there offered up a sacrifice to the deities of the place, and chiefly to Hercules, the leading god. At stated periods, according to an ancient legend, Hercules inspired the dreams of the priests, and, in a vision, gave his orders, "That "a set of horses, ready for the chase, should be sta- "tioned near the temple. The hunters, accordingly, "are drawn out, well equipped with quivers and a "store of arrows." Thus caparisoned, they stretch at full speed through the woods, and, at the close of day, return to the temple without an arrow left, weary, and panting for breath. The god appears again, in a midnight vision, to tell the priests the tracts of the forest where he pursued his game. After this information, diligent search is made, and a large quantity of game, killed in the chase, is found in the woods.

XIV. Gotarzes had not as yet assembled all his forces, and the issue of a battle was what he wished to avoid. The river Corma served to cover him from the assaults of the enemy. He there stood at bay, devising various delays, encamping, and shifting his ground; and though provoked by various insults, and even by messengers challenged to the conflict, he contrived, notwithstanding, to protract the war, while his agents were busy in the adverse camp, by gifts and promises, seducing the friends of Meherdates. Izates, king of the Adiabenians, was the first to withdraw with all his forces. Abgarus, the Arabian, followed his example, both displaying the fickle disposition and venality of barbarians. To sue for kings at the hands of Rome was their frequent custom; but experience shows that they petitioned only to betray. Weakened by desertion, and suspecting further treachery, Meherdates resolved to try the issue of a battle. Nor was Gotarzes disposed to decline the conflict. A fierce engagement followed, with great slaughter on both sides. The victory was long held in suspense, till Car-

rhenes, having broke the enemy's lines, pursued his advantage with too much ardour. He was attacked in the rear by a body of reserve, and hemmed in on every side. Meherdates saw nothing but impending ruin. In his distress he trusted to the advice of Parrhaces, one of his father's freedmen. By that traitor he was thrown into fetters, and delivered up to the conqueror. Gotarzes behaved with the pride and insolence of victory. He reviled his captive as a stranger to the blood of the Arsacides, a man of foreign extraction, and a slave to Rome. He ordered his ears to be cut off, and left him in that condition, a wretched proof of Parthian clemency, and a living disgrace to the Romans. Gotarzes was soon after carried off by a fit of illness. Vonones, at that time governor of Media, mounted the vacant throne. Of this prince, either in his distresses or his prosperity, nothing remains worthy of a place in history. After a short and inglorious reign, he left the Parthian diadem to his son Vologeses.

XV. During these transactions a new alarm was raised by Mithridates, king of Bosphorus, who had been lately driven out of his dominions. He continued, ever since his expulsion, wandering from place to place, forlorn and helpless. He learned, at length, that Didius, the Roman general, retired with the flower of his army, leaving the kingdom of Thrace in the hands of Cotys, a prince without experience, scarcely settled on the throne, and depending on the slender support of a few cohorts, under the command of Julius Aquila, a Roman knight. The news inspired Mithridates with sudden courage. He roused the neighbouring nations, drew together a body of deserters, and, putting himself at the head of his tumultuary levies, fell with impetuous fury on the king of the Dandarides, and made himself master of his dominions. The invasion of Bosphorus was expected to be his next attempt. Cotys and Aquila did not think themselves in force to resist the attack; and Zorsines, king of the Siracians, commencing hostilities in that critical juncture, added greatly to their fears. In this distress, they looked round to the neighbouring states for assistance,

and by their ambassadors invited Eunones, king of the Adorsians, to join the Roman arms. In a war between a powerful nation and a ruined, dismantled king, it was not difficult to form a new confederacy. The plan of their operations was soon settled. Eunones was to ravage the open country with his cavalry. The Romans undertook to lay siege to the towns and places of strength.

XVI. The combined forces took the field. On their march the Adorsians led the van, and also brought up the rear. The centre consisted of the cohorts and the succours collected in Bosphorus, armed after the Roman manner. The enemy not daring to look them in the face, they marched, without opposition, to the town of Soza, in the country of the Dandarides. Finding the place abandoned by Mithridates, they took possession, and to guard against the treachery of the inhabitants, left it strongly garrisoned. They penetrated next into the country of the Siracians, and having crossed the river Panda, invested the city of Uspes, situated on an eminence, and defended by walls and a fosse. The walls, indeed, not being constructed with stone, but with earth thrown up and bound with hurdles, could not long resist the operations of a siege. Towers of considerable height were advanced against the works, and from that elevation darts and flaming brands were thrown into the town with such incessant fury, that if the approach of night had not prevented a general assault, the siege had been begun and ended in a single day.

XVII. The besieged, next morning, sent a deputation with offers of an immediate surrender, and no less than ten thousand slaves, on condition that the free-born should remain unhurt. The terms were rejected. After a capitulation, to put the inhabitants to the sword would be an act of inhumanity, and a violation of all the laws of war. On the other hand, to bridle such a number, an adequate force could not be spared from a scanty army. The besiegers, therefore, returned for answer, that every thing must be left to the decision of the sword. The soldiers scaled the

walls, and the signal was given for a general slaughter. The city was levelled to the ground. The adjacent nations saw that neither arms, nor lines of circumvallation, nor places almost inaccessible, defended by nature and by rapid rivers, could withstand the vigour of the Roman arms. In this general consternation, Zorsines, the Siracian king, began to waver. He now considered whether it were best to adhere to Mithridates, or to provide in time for the security of his own dominions. Self-interest prevailed. He gave hostages, and humbled himself before the image of Claudius. Nothing could be more honourable to the Roman army. Victorious without the loss of blood, they traversed a vast tract of country, and were within three days of the Tanais. Their return was not so prosperous. They went back by sea, and some of the ships were thrown by adverse winds on the coast of Taurus. The barbarians poured down to the shore, and with savage fury murdered a considerable number, with the præfect of a cohort, and most of the centurions.

XVIII. Meanwhile Mithridates, undone and hopeless, began to consider where he might implore compassion. His brother Cotys had at first betrayed him, and then became an open enemy: on him no reliance could be had. If he surrendered to the Romans, there was not in the territory of Bosphorus any one officer of weight and authority to ensure the performance of his promises. In this distress, the unhappy monarch turned his thoughts to Eunones. That prince had no motives for personal animosity, and his late alliance with Rome gave him no small degree of influence. Mithridates resolved to apply at the court. With a dejected mien, and a garb that spoke his wretchedness, he entered the palace, and falling prostrate at the feet of the king, "Behold," he said, "behold the man, "who for years has grappled with the whole power "of Rome. Mithridates humbles himself before you, "the persecuted Mithridates, whom the Romans have "pursued by sea and land. My fate is in your hands; "use your discretion: treat as you shall think best,

"a prince descended from the great Achæmenes. "The honour of that high lineage is all my enemies "have left me."

XIX. The appearance of a man so distinguished, the turns of fortune that attended him, and, even in ruin, the affliction that softened, but could not subdue his spirit, touched Eunones with generous sympathy. He raised the royal suppliant from the ground. He praised the magnanimity with which he threw himself into the power of the Adorsian nation, and, with pleasure, undertook to be mediator between Rome and the unfortunate monarch. He despatched messengers to Claudius with letters to the following effect: "In all "treaties between the Roman people and foreign na- "tions, similitude of fortune was the basis of their al- "liance. The present union between Claudius and "the Adorsians was founded on a participation of vic- "tory; and victory is then most honourable when "mercy spares the vanquished. Of this truth Zor- "sines is a recent instance. He still retains his for- "mer possessions. But equal terms could not be "expected in the case of Mithridates. His offence "was of a more grievous nature. To restore him to "his throne and kingdom is not the object of this ap- "plication. Spare his life, and let him not walk in fet- "ters, a public spectacle to grace the victor's triumph."

XX. Claudius was, at all times, disposed to act with moderation towards the nobility of foreign nations. In the present conjuncture, he doubted which were most expedient, to receive the royal prisoner under a promise of pardon, or to take him by force of arms. Resentment and the love of revenge were strong incentives; but still there were reasons of policy in the opposite scale. "A war must be commenced in a distant "region, where the roads were difficult, and the sea "had neither harbours nor stations for shipping; "where the struggle would be with fierce and warlike "kings, and a people by their wandering life inured "to fatigue; where the soil was unproductive, and an "army, of course, would be distressed for provisions. "Campaigns drawn out into length would dispirit the "soldiers; sudden operations might be attended with

"hazard: from victory no glory could redound to the "Roman name, and to be defeated were indelible dis- "grace." For these reasons, it was judged advisable to accept the proffered terms. Mithridates, in that case, would remain a wandering exile, poor, distress- ed, and wretched. To protract his days were to pro- tract his misery. Claudius returned an answer to Eunones: "Mithridates," he observed, "had merited "the utmost rigour, and the vengeance of Rome was "able to reach him. But to subdue the proud, and "spare the suppliant, had ever been a Roman virtue. "It was by curbing the pride of kings, and by con- "quering an entire people, that Rome acquired re- "nown in arms. Then, and then only, she had rea- "son to triumph."

XXI. In consequence of these despatches, Mithri- dates was delivered up to Julius Cilo, at that time imperial procurator of Pontus. He brought with him to Rome a mind unbroken by his misfortunes. In his language to Claudius he towered above his helpless condition. One sentence that fell from him was cele- brated at the time. "In me you see a man, not taken "prisoner, but willing to surrender. I came of my "own accord; if you doubt the fact, set me at liberty, "and retake me if you are able." He was conducted under a guard to the rostrum, and there presented as a spectacle to the people. He stood unmoved, with his natural ferocity pictured in his countenance. Cilo and Aquila were rewarded for their services; the for- mer with consular ornaments, and the latter with the ensigns of prætorian dignity.

XXII. During the same consulship, the hatred of Agrippina, deep and implacable, broke out with ga- thered rage against Lollia, who had been guilty of the crime of contending for the imperial bed. An accu- sation was soon contrived, and a prosecutor subor- ned. The substance of the charge was, "That in the late "contest for the emperor's choice, Lollia held consul- "tations with Chaldæan seers; that she employed "magicians, and sent to consult the Clarian Apollo." She was condemned unheard. Claudius addressed the senate on the occasion. He mentioned the no-

bility of her birth; by the maternal line she was niece to Lucius Volucius, grand niece to Cotta Messalinus, and formerly the wife of Memmius Regulus. He said nothing of her marriage with Caligula. Having made that flourishing preface, he changed his tone, imputing to her dark designs against the state. To defeat her pernicious views, nothing remained but to confiscate her estates, and banish her out of Italy. The senate complied. Out of her immoderate wealth she was allowed to retain no more than five millions of sesterces. Calpurnia, another woman of high rank, was obnoxious to the resentments of Agrippina. It happened that Claudius, in accidental discourse, without a wish to enjoy her person, praised the elegance of her figure. This gave jealousy to the empress. She considered, however, that the mere crime of beauty did not deserve to be punished with death. She sent a tribune to Lollia, with orders to make her put an end to her days. Cadius Rufus, at the same time, was found guilty of extortion at the suit of the Bithynians.

XXIII. As a mark of favour to the province of Narbon Gaul, and to reward the veneration in which the authority of the senate had ever been held by the people of that country, it was settled by a decree, that such of the natives as were Roman senators should be at liberty, without special license from the emperor, to visit their estates in their native province, with as full and ample privileges as had been granted to the Sicilian senators. Sohemus and Agrippa, kings of Ituria and Judæa, being both dead, their respective territories were annexed to the province of Syria. An order was also made, that the auguries, relating to the public safety, which had lain dormant for five-and-twenty years, should be revived, and never again suffered to fall into disuse. The limits of the city were enlarged by Claudius. The right of directing that business was, by ancient usage, vested in all such as extended the boundaries of the empire. The right, however, had not been exercised by any of the Roman commanders (Sylla and Augustus excepted,) though

remote and powerful nations had been subdued by their victorious arms.

XXIV. What was done in early times, by the ambition or the public virtue of the Roman kings, can not now be seen through the mist that hangs over distant ages. It may, however, be matter of some curiosity to make out the foundation of the city, and the boundaries assigned by Romulus. The first out-line began at the ox-market, where still is to be seen the brazen statue of a bull, that animal being commonly employed at the plough. From that place a furrow was carried on of sufficient dimensions to include the great altar of Hercules. By boundary-stones, fixed at proper distances, the circuit was continued along the foot of mount Palatine to the altar of Consus, extending thence to the old Curiæ, next to the chapel of the Lares, and finally to the great Roman forum. The capitol, it is generally thought, was added, not by Romulus, but by Titus Tatius. From that period the city grew with the growth of the empire. With regard to the enlargement made by Claudius, the curious may be easily satisfied, as the public records contain an exact description.

XXV. In the consulship of Caius Antistius and Marcus Suillius, the adoption of Domitius was hurried on by the credit and influence of Pallas. Connected with Agrippina, whom he had raised to imperial splendour, by ties of mutual interest, and still more so by the indulgence of criminal passions, this favourite advised his master to provide for the public safety, and, in aid to the tender years of Britannicus, to raise collateral branches in the Cæsarean line. For this measure Augustus had left a precedent. That emperor adopted the issue of his wife, though he had, in that very juncture, grand-children to represent him. Tiberius copied the example, and to his own immediate offspring united Germanicus. It would therefore become the wisdom of Claudius to embrace, as his own, a young man who would in time be able to relieve the sovereign, and lighten the cares of government. Convinced by this reasoning, Claudius gave the pre-

cedence to Domitius, though but two years older than his own son. On this subject he made a speech to the senate, content to be the organ of what his freedman had suggested. It was observed by men versed in the history of their country, that this was the first adoption into the Claudian family; an old patrician line, which, from the days of Atta Clausus, had continued, without any mixture of foreign blood, in one regular course of descent.

XXVI. The senate passed a vote of thanks to the emperor; but in a style of exquisite flattery their court was chiefly paid to Domitius. A law was also enacted, by virtue of which the young prince, under the name of NERO, was naturalized into the Claudian family. Agrippina was dignified with the title of AUGUSTA. During these transactions, there was not a man so void of sentiment, as not to behold the case of Britannicus with an eye of compassion. His very slaves were taken from him. His step-mother interposed with officious civility. The young prince laughed at her kindness, aware of the underplot which she was carrying on against him. Want of discernment was not among his faults. It has been said that he was by nature penetrating: that, perhaps, was his true character; or, it may be, that men were willing to give him credit for talents, without waiting to make the experiment.

XXVII. Agrippina had now the ambition to display her weight and influence to the eyes of foreign nations. To this end she caused a body of veterans to be sent to the capital city of the Ubians, the place of her nativity, to be established there as a colony, called after her own name. When that people first passed over the Rhine, it happened that Agrippa, her grandfather, was the Roman general, who received them as the allies of Rome. In the present juncture, when the new colony was to be settled, a sudden alarm broke out in the Upper Germany, occasioned by an irruption of the Cattians, who issued forth from their hive in quest of plunder. To check their progress, Lucius Pomponius despatched a body of auxiliary troops, composed of the Vangiones and Nemetæans, with a squadron of

light horse, to make a forced march, and, if they could not attack the front line of the barbarians, to fall upon the rear. The ardour of the soldiers was not inferior to the skill of the general. They formed two divisions: one marched to the left, and came up with the freebooters, who had been committing depredations, and lay sunk in sleep and wine. The victory was cheap, but enhanced by the joy with which the conquering soldiers released, at the end of forty years, some of the prisoners who were taken in the massacre of Varus and his legions.

XXVIII. The second division, which had marched to the right, and by a shorter road, met with greater success. The barbarians ventured to give battle, and were defeated with prodigious slaughter. Elate with success, and loaded with spoils, the conquerors marched back to mount Taunus, where Pomponius, at the head of his legions, lay in wait, expecting that the Cattians, prompted by a spirit of revenge, would return to the charge. But the barbarians, dreading the Romans on one side, and on the other, their constant enemies, the Cheruscans, sent a deputation to Rome, with hostages to secure a pacification. Triumphal honours were decreed to Pomponius; but military fame is the least part of the estimation in which he is held by posterity. He excelled in elegant composition, and the character of the general, is now eclipsed by the genius of the poet.

XXIX. Vannius, who had been formerly raised by Drusus to reign over the Suevians, was, about this time, driven from his kingdom. His reign at first was mild and popular; but the habit of commanding had corrupted his nature. Pride and arrogance had taken root in his heart. Domestic factions conspired against him, and the neighbouring nations declared open hostility. Vibillius, king of the Hermundurians, conducted the enterprise. He was joined by Vangio and Sido, the nephews of Vannius by a sister. In this quarrel Claudius was determined not to interfere. Though often pressed to take a decided part, he observed a strict neutrality, content with promising the Suevian king a safe retreat from the rage of his enemies. In

his despatches to Publius Atellius Hister, who had the command in Pannonia, his orders were, that the legion and the troops of the province should be held in readiness on the banks of the Danube, to succour the vanquished, and repel the incursions of the barbarians, if they attempted to invade the frontier. A powerful confederacy was then actually formed by the nations of Germany. The Ligians, and other states, were up in arms, attracted by the fame of an opulent kingdom, which Vannius, during a space of thirty years, had made still richer by plunder and depredations. To make head against the forces combined against him was not in the power of the Suevian king. The natural strength of his kingdom consisted of infantry only: the Iazigians, a people of Sarmatia, supplied him with a body of horse. Notwithstanding this reinforcement, Vannius felt his inferiority. He resolved to keep within the strong holds and fastnesses of the country, and draw the war into a lingering length.

XXX. The Iazigians were not of a temper to endure the slow operations of a siege. They spread themselves, in their desultory manner, round the country, and by their rashness brought on a general engagement. The Ligians and Hermundurians fell in with their roving parties. Vannius was obliged to sally out to the assistance of his friends. He gave battle, and was totally overthrown. But the praise of valour could not be withheld from him. Covered with honourable wounds, he escaped to his fleet, which lay in the Danube. His partisans followed him, and, with a proper allotment of lands, were settled in Pannonia. The dominions of the deposed king were divided between his two nephews, Vangio and Sido, both, from that time, distinguished by their fidelity to Rome. In the beginning of their reign, they flourished in the affections of the people; honoured by all, while they struggled for power; when they obtained it, despised and hated. Their own misconduct was, perhaps, the cause; perhaps the fickle temper of the people; or, it may be, that in the nature and genius of servitude,

there is a tendency to innovation, always discontented, sullen and unquiet.

XXXI. Publius Ostorius was appointed governor of Britain, in the character of proprætor. On his arrival he found the province in commotion. A new commander, with an army wholly unknown to him, the barbarians imagined would not venture to open a winter campaign. Fierce with this idea, they made an irruption into the territory of the states in alliance with Rome, and carried devastation through the country. Ostorius, knowing how much depends on the first operations of war, put himself at the head of the light cohorts, and, by rapid marches, advanced against the enemy. The Britons were taken by surprise. All who resisted were put to the sword. The fugitives were pursued with prodigious slaughter. The rout was so complete, that there was no reason to apprehend a junction of their forces; but peace on those terms, the general knew, would be no better than disguised hostility. The legions would still be subject to perpetual alarms from a fierce and insidious enemy. He therefore resolved to disarm all who were suspected, and, by extending a chain of forts between the Nen and the Severn, to confine the malecontents between those two rivers. To counteract this design, the Icenians took up arms; a brave and warlike people, who, at their own request, had lived in friendship with the Romans, and were, by consequence, unimpaired by the calamities of war. They formed a league with the adjacent states, and chose their ground for a decisive action. The place was inclosed with a rampart thrown up with sod, leaving an entrance in one part only, and that so difficult of access, that the Roman cavalry would not be able to force their way. Ostorius resolved to storm the place. Though unsupported by the legions, he relied on the valour of the allied forces, and, having formed his disposition for the attack, ordered his cavalry to dismount, and act with the foot soldiers. The signal being given, the assault began, and the rampart was carried. The Britons, inclosed by their own fortifications, and pressed

on every side, were thrown into the utmost confusion. Yet even in that distress, conscious of the guilt of rebellion, and seeing no way to escape, they fought to the last, and gave signal proofs of heroic bravery. In this engagement Marcus Ostorius, the general's son, saved the life of a Roman, and obtained the civic crown.

XXXII. The defeat of the Icenians drew after it important consequences. The neighbouring nations, no longer balancing between peace and war, laid down their arms. Ostorius led his army against the Cangians, and laid waste their country. The soldiers carried off a considerable booty, the enemy never daring to make head against them. Wherever they attempted to annoy the army by sudden skirmishes, they paid for their rashness. The sea, that lies between Britain and Ireland, was within a short march, when Ostorius received intelligence of an insurrection among the Brigantes. The news obliged him to return with expedition. Till every thing was secured in his rear, it was his maxim not to push on his conquests. The Brigantes were soon reduced to subjection. Such as resisted were cut to pieces, and a free pardon was granted to the rest. The Silures were not so easily quelled: neither lenity nor rigorous measures could induce them to submit. To bridle the insolence of that warlike race, Ostorius judged it expedient to form a camp for the legions in the heart of their country. For this purpose a colony, supported by a strong body of veterans, was stationed at Camalodunum, on the lands conquered from the enemy. From this measure a twofold effect was expected: the garrison would be able to overawe the insurgents, and give to the allied states a specimen of law and civil policy.

XXXIII. These arrangements settled, Ostorius marched against the Silures. To their natural ferocity that people added the courage which they now derived from the presence of Caractacus. Renowned for his valour, and for various turns of good and evil fortune, that heroic chief had spread his fame through the island. His knowledge of the country, and his skill in all the wiles and stratagems of savage warfare, gave him many advantages; but he could not hope

with inferior numbers to make a stand against a well-disciplined army. He therefore marched into the territory of the Ordovicians. Having there drawn to his standard all who considered peace with Rome as another name for slavery, he determined to try the issue of a battle. For this purpose he chose a spot where the approach and the retreat were difficult to the enemy, and to himself every way advantageous. He took post in a situation defended by steep and craggy hills. In some places where the mountains opened, and the acclivity afforded an easy ascent, he fortified the spot with massy stones, heaped together in the form of a rampart. A river, with fords and shallows of uncertain depth, washed the extremity of the plain. On the outside of his fortifications, a vast body of troops showed themselves in force, and in order of battle.

XXXIV. The chieftains of the various nations were busy in every quarter. They rushed along the ranks; they exhorted their men; they roused the timid; they confirmed the brave; and, by hopes, by promises, by every generous motive, inflamed the ardour of their troops. Caractacus was seen in every part of the field; he darted along the lines; he exclaimed aloud, "This day, my fellow-warriors, this very day decides "the fate of Britain. The æra of liberty, or eternal "bondage, begins from this hour. Remember your "brave and warlike ancestors, who met Julius Cæsar in "open combat, and chased him from the coast of Bri-"tain. They were the men who freed their country "from a foreign yoke; who delivered the land from "taxations, imposed at the will of a master: who ba-"nished from your sight the fasces and the Roman "axes; and, above all, who rescued your wives and "daughters from violation." The soldiers received this speech with shouts of applause. With a spirit of enthusiastic valour, each individual bound himself by the form of oath peculiar to his nation, to brave every danger, and prefer death to slavery.

XXXV. The intrepid countenance of the Britons, and the spirit that animated their whole army, struck Ostorius with astonishment. He saw a river to be

passed; a palisade to be forced; a steep hill to be surmounted; and the several posts defended by a prodigious multitude. The soldiers, notwithstanding, burned with impatience for the onset. All things give way to valour, was the general cry. The tribunes and other officers seconded the ardour of the men. Ostorius reconnoitred the ground, and having marked where the defiles were impenetrable, or easy of approach, gave the signal for the attack. The river was passed with little difficulty. The Romans advanced to the parapet. The struggle there was obstinate, and as long as it was fought with missive weapons, the Britons had the advantage. Ostorius ordered his men to advance under a military shell, and level the pile of stones that served as a fence to the enemy. A close engagement followed. The Britons abandoned their ranks, and fled with precipitation to the ridge of the hills. The Romans pursued with eagerness. Not only the light troops, but even the legionary soldiers forced their way to the summit of the hills, under a heavy shower of darts. The Britons, having neither breastplates nor helmets, were not able to maintain the conflict. The legions, sword in hand, or with their javelins, bore down all before them. The auxiliaries, with their spears and sabres, made prodigious havoc. The victory was decisive. The wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken prisoners. His brother surrendered at discretion.

XXXVI. Caractacus fled for protection to Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes. But adversity has no friends. By that princess he was loaded with irons, and delivered up to the conqueror. He had waged war with the Romans during the last nine years. His fame was not confined to his native island; it passed into the provinces, and spread all over Italy. Curiosity was eager to behold the heroic chieftain, who for such a length of time, made head against a great and powerful empire. Even at Rome the name of Caractacus was in high celebrity. The emperor, willing to magnify the glory of the conquest, bestowed the highest praise on the valour of the vanquished king. He assembled the people to behold a spectacle worthy of

their view. In the field before the camp the prætorian bands were drawn up under arms. The followers of the British chief walked in procession. The military accoutrements, the harness and rich collars, which he had gained in various battles, were displayed with pomp. The wife of Caractacus, his daughter and his brother, followed next: he himself closed the melancholy train. The rest of the prisoners, struck with terror, descended to mean and abject supplications. Caractacus alone was superior to misfortune. With a countenance still unaltered, not a symptom of fear appearing, no sorrow, no condescension, he behaved with dignity even in ruin. Being placed before the tribunal, he delivered himself in the following manner:

XXXVII. "If to the nobility of my birth, and the "splendour of exalted station, I had united the virtues "of moderation, Rome had beheld me, not in capti- "vity, but a royal visitor, and a friend. The alliance "of a prince, descended from an illustrious line of an- "cestors; a prince, whose sway extended over many "nations, would not have been unworthy of your "choice. A reverse of fortune is now the lot of Ca- "ractacus. The event to you is glorious, and to me "humiliating. I had arms, and men, and horses; I "had wealth in abundance: can you wonder that I "was unwilling to lose them? The ambition of Rome "aspires to universal dominion: and must mankind, "by consequence, stretch their necks to the yoke? "I stood at bay for years: had I acted otherwise, "where, on your part, had been the glory of conquest, "and where, on mine, the honour of a brave resist- "ance? I am now in your power: if you are bent on "vengeance, execute your purpose; the bloody scene "will soon be over, and the name of Caractacus will "sink into oblivion. Preserve my life, and I shall be, "to late posterity, a monument of Roman clemency." Claudius granted him a free pardon, and the same to his wife, his daughter, and his brother. Released from their fetters, they advanced to another tribunal near at hand, where Agrippina showed herself in state. They returned thanks to her, and paid their veneration in the same style as they had before addressed

to the emperor. The sight was altogether new. A woman, stationed amidst the ensigns and the armies of Rome, presented a spectacle unknown to the old republic: but in an empire acquired by the valour of her ancestors, Agrippina claimed an equal share.

XXXVIII. At the next meeting of the senate, the victory over Caractacus was mentioned with the highest applause, as an event no way inferior to what had been seen in ancient times, when Publius Scipio brought Syphax in chains to Rome; when Lucius Paulus led Perses in captivity; and when other commanders exhibited to the Roman people kings and princes at their chariot wheels. Triumphal ornaments were decreed to Ostorius. That officer had hitherto seen his operations crowned with success. He began soon after to experience the vicissitudes of fortune. Perhaps the war, by the overthrow of Caractacus, was thought to be at an end, and, in that persuasion, military discipline was relaxed; perhaps the enemy, enraged by the loss of that gallant chief, fought with inflamed resentment. A camp had been formed in the country of the Silures, and a chain of forts was to be erected. The Britons in a body surrounded the officer who commanded the legionary cohorts, and, if succours had not arrived in time from the neighbouring garrisons, the whole corps had been cut to pieces. The præfect of the camp with eight centurions and the bravest of the soldiers, were killed on the spot. A foraging party, and the detachment sent to support them, were soon after attacked, and put to the rout.

XXXIX. Ostorius, on the first alarm, ordered the light-armed cohorts to advance against the enemy. That reinforcement was insufficient, till the legionary soldiers marched to their support. The battle was renewed, at first on equal terms, but, in the end, to the disadvantage of the Britons. But their loss was inconsiderable. The approach of night prevented a pursuit. From that time the Britons kept up a constant alarm. Frequent battles, or rather skirmishes, were fought with their detached parties, roving in quest of plunder. They met in sudden encounters, as chance directed, or valour prompted; in the fens, in the

woods, in the narrow defiles; the men, on some occasions, led on by their chiefs and frequently without their knowledge, as resentment, or the love of booty, happened to incite their fury. Of all the Britons, the Silures were the most determined. They fought with obstinacy, with inveterate hatred. It seems the Roman general had declared, that the very name of the Silures must be extirpated, like that of the Sigambrians, formerly driven out of Germany, and transplanted into Gaul. That expression reached the Silures and roused their fiercest passions. Two auxiliary cohorts, whom the avarice of their officers sent in quest of plunder, were intercepted by that ferocious people, and all made prisoners. A fair distribution of the spoils, and the captives, drew the neighbouring states into the confederacy. Ostorius, at this time, was worn out with anxiety. He sunk under the fatigue, and expired, to the great joy of the Britons, who saw a great and able commander, not, indeed, slain in battle, but overcome by the war.

XL. The death of Ostorius being known at Rome, the emperor, aware that a province of so much importance ought not to remain without a governor, sent Aulus Didius to take upon him the command. That officer set out with all possible expedition; but on his arrival found the island in a state of distraction. The legion under Manlius Valens had risked a battle, and suffered a defeat. In order to impress with terror the new commander, the Britons took care to swell the fame of their victory. Didius, on his part, was willing to magnify the loss. The merit of the general, he knew, would rise in proportion to the danger surmounted; and if he failed, the difficulty would be an apology for his conduct. In the defeat of Valens, it was the nation of the Silures that struck the blow. Emboldened by success, they continued their predatory war, till the arrival of Didius checked their operations. In this juncture, Venusius was the British chieftain; a man, as already mentioned, born in the city of the Jugantes, and, since the loss of Caractacus, the first in fame for valour and military experience. He had married Cartismandua, the queen of the Bri-

gantes; and while they lived on good terms, his fidelity to Rome remained inviolate. Being afterwards driven from her throne and bed, he pursued his revenge by open hostilities, and even dared to wage war against the Romans.

The quarrel was at first a civil war amongst themselves. Cartismandua contrived to seize, by stratagem, the brother of Venusius, with the rest of his kindred. The Britons by that event were fired with indignation. They scorned to submit to a female government, and, with the flower of their youth, attacked Cartismandua in the heart of her territories. The insurrection was foreseen, and a detachment from the cohorts was sent in time to counteract the motions of the enemy. An engagement followed, at first with doubtful success; but after a struggle, victory inclined to the side of the Romans. In another part of the country, the legion under the command of Cesius Nasica fought with equal success. Didius did not expose his person in any of these engagements. Impaired by years, and loaded with accumulated honours, he was content to act by his inferior officers; and while the enemy was kept in check, the honour of doing it was not his passion. These transactions, which happened in the course of different years, under the conduct of Ostorius and Didius, are here related in one connected series, to avoid breaking the thread of the narration. I now return to the order of time.

XLI. In the fifth consulship of Claudius, and the first of his colleague, Servius Cornelius Orphitus, the manly gown was assigned to Nero, before his time, that, though still under age, he might appear qualified to take upon him a share in public business. The senate, in a fit of adulation, resolved that the young prince should be declared capable of the consulship at the age of twenty, and be considered in the mean time, as consul elect, with proconsular authority out of the city, and the additional title of prince of the Roman youth. Claudius not only assented to those flattering decrees, but, in the name of Nero, gave a largess to the people, and a donative to the army. To conciliate the affections of the people, the Circen-

sian games were likewise exhibited. During that spectacle, Britannicus and Nero passed in review; the former clad in the prætexta, or the dress of his boyish days; the latter, with the triumphal ornaments of a Roman general. So glaring a difference struck the spectators, as a certain prelude of their future fortunes. Among the centurions and tribunes there were men of principle, who beheld the case of Britannicus with an eye of compassion. All such were removed from court; some under pretence of advancing them to higher offices, and the rest for plausible reasons. The policy was extended even to the freedmen. In that class, whoever was found to be above corruption, was dismissed from his place.

The two young princes met by accident. Nero saluted Britannicus by name, and in return was familiarly called Domitius. This incident gave umbrage to Agrippina. She flew to the emperor with her complaint. "Contempt," she said, "was thrown on the "adoption of Nero; what the senate decreed, and the "voice of the people ratified, was repealed with con- "tumacy in the very palace. If the men, who taught "those dangerous lessons, were not repressed, the mis- "chief would increase, and, perhaps, prove fatal to "the commonwealth." Claudius was easily alarmed. He considered what was no more than bare surmise, as a crime then actually committed, and, accordingly, either sent into banishment, or put to death, the best and ablest of his son's tutors. New men were appointed to superintend the prince's education, and the choice was left to the step-mother.

XLII. Agrippina had still greater objects in view, but Lusius Geta and Rufius Crispinus were first to be removed from the command of the prætorian bands. They were both under obligations to Messalina, and by sentiment, attached to her children. Men of their disposition might obstruct her measures. She represented to the emperor, that under two rival commanders, the soldiers would be divided into factions; but if that important office centered in one person, all would act with a principle of union, and strict attention to military discipline. Claudius concurred in the

same opinion. The command was given to Afranius Burrhus; an officer of great experience and a warlike character, but disposed to remember the friend that raised him to that elevation. Having succeeded in these arrangements, Agrippina thought it time to act without reserve; she claimed a right to be conveyed in her carriage to the capitol; a right, by ancient usage, allowed only to the sacerdotal order, the vestal virgins, and the statues of the gods. Being now communicated to Agrippina, it could not fail to raise the veneration of the people for a princess, in whom they saw the daughter, sister, wife, and mother of an emperor; a combination of illustrious titles never, before that time, united in one person.

In this juncture, Vitellius, the active leader of Agrippina's faction, after having stood high in the esteem of Claudius, was at last, in an advanced age, involved in a prosecution, set on foot against him by Junius Lupus, a member of the senate. Such is the instability of human grandeur! The charge imported violated majesty, and a design to seize the reins of government. Claudius was willing to listen to the story; but, by the interposition of Agrippina, who scorned to descend to prayers and supplications, the blow recoiled upon the prosecutor. He was interdicted from fire and water. To stretch resentment further was not the wish of Vitellius.

XLIII. In the course of this year, the people were kept in a constant alarm by a succession of portents and prodigies. Birds of evil omen infested the capitol; earthquakes were felt; houses were laid in ruin, and while the multitude, in a general panic, pressed forward to make their escape, the feeble and infirm were trampled under foot. A dearth of corn brought on a famine: this too was deemed a prodigy. The people were not content to murmur their discontents; they crowded to the tribunal, and gathering round the emperor, then sitting in judgment, they forced him from his seat, and pushed him to the extremity of the forum. The guards came to his assistance, and Claudius made his way through the crowd. Fifteen days subsistence was the most that Rome had then in store.

The winter, providentially, was mild and favourable to navigation: distress and misery must, otherwise, have been the consequence. In former times the case was very different. Italy was the granary that supplied foreign markets. Even at this hour, the prolific vigour of the soil is not worn out; but to depend on Egypt and Africa is the prevailing system. The lives of the people are, by choice, committed to the caprice of winds and waves.

XLIV. In the same year the flame of war broke out between the Armenians and Iberians. The Romans and the Parthians were, by consequence, involved in the quarrel. The sceptre of Parthia was at that time swayed by Vologeses, with the consent of his brothers, though his mother, by birth a Greek, was no higher than a concubine. Pharasmanes reigned in Iberia, confirmed on his throne by long possession. His brother, Mithridates, received the regal diadem of Armenia from the power of Rome. The former had a son named Rhadamistus, of a tall and graceful stature, remarkable for bodily vigour and an understanding perfectly trained in the political school of his father. His talents were high in the esteem of all the neighbouring states. He saw, with impatience, the old age of his father protracted to a length of years. To disguise his ambition was no part of his character. He expressed his discontent in a manner that alarmed Pharasmanes. That monarch saw the aspiring genius of his son; and, being in the decline of life, he dreaded the enterprising spirit of a young man, who had conciliated to himself the affections of the people. To change the tide of his passions, and find employment for him elsewhere, he held forth the kingdom of Armenia, as a dazzling and inviting object: he himself, he said, expelled the Parthians, and placed Mithridates on the throne. Pharasmanes added, that it would not be advisable to proceed with open force. Covert stratagem might deceive Mithridates, and insure success.

Rhadamistus made the best of his way to his uncle's court, as to a place of shelter from the displeasure of his father, and the tyranny of a step-mother.

He met with a gracious reception. Mithridates treated him as his own son, with all the tenderness of a father. The young prince, in the mean time, drew to his interest the nobility of the country; and while his uncle loaded him with favours, he was busy in forming a conspiracy against the crown and life of his benefactor.

XLV. Having concerted his measures, he returned, under colour of a family-reconciliation, to his father's court. He there explained the progress of his treachery, the snares that were prepared, and the necessity of giving the finishing blow by force of arms. To find ostensible reasons for open hostility, was not difficult to a politic genius like that of Pharasmanes. He alleged, that in the war between himself and the king of the Albanians, his application to the Romans, fo. a reinforcement, was defeated by the practices of Mithridates; and an injury of so heinous a nature could not be expiated by any thing less than the ruin of the man who did the mischief. To this end, he gave the command of his forces to his son, who entered Armenia at the head of a numerous army. An invasion so unexpected filled Mithridates with consternation. He fled the field, and, leaving the enemy in possession of his camp, threw himself into the fort of Gorneas; a place strong by nature, and defended by a Roman garrison, under the command of Cælius Pollio, the præfect, and Casperius, a centurion. The machinations of a siege, and the use of warlike engines, are things unknown to savage nations: the Romans have reduced that branch of the military art to a regular system. Rhadamistus attempted to carry the works by assault, but without effect, and with considerable loss. He formed a blockade, and, in the mean time, made his approaches to the avarice of the governor. By bribes and presents he bargained with that officer to betray his trust. The centurion protested against so foul a treachery, declaring, in a tone of firmness, that he would neither agree to give up a confederate prince, nor to barter away the kingdom of Armenia, which had been assigned to Mithridates by the Roman people.

Pollio, the commander in chief, affected to dread the superior force of the enemy; and Rhadamistus,

pleading the orders of his father, still urged on the siege. In this distress, Casperius, the centurion, stipulated a cessation of arms, and left the garrison, in order to have an interview with Pharasmanes, and deter him from prosecuting the war. If his endeavours failed, he resolved to proceed with expedition to Ummidius Quadratus, who commanded in Syria, in order to make that governor acquainted with the state of affairs, and the iniquity of the whole proceeding.

XLVI. The centurion had no sooner left the place, than Pollio felt himself at liberty to act without control. He advised Mithridates to compromise the quarrel, and end the war by a regular treaty. He urged the ties of natural affection between brothers, and the rights of seniority, which preponderated in favour of Pharasmanes. He added, that "Mithridates was, in "fact, the son-in-law of his brother, and at the same "time, uncle and father-in-law to Rhadamistus. The "Iberians were superior in number, and yet willing "to accede to terms of pacification. The perfidy "of the Armenians was become proverbial. Pent up in "a fortress, ill supplied with provisions, he could not "hope to hold out much longer. In that distress, what "room was left for deliberation? Peace, on reasonable terms, was preferable to a destructive war."

Such were the arguments urged by Cælius Pollio; but Mithridates suspected the counsels of a man, who had seduced one of the royal concubines, and shown himself a venal tool, ready at the beck of the highest bidder, to commit any crime however atrocious. Meanwhile, Casperius reached the court of Pharasmanes. He expostulated with that monarch, and pressed him to raise the siege. The politic king amused the centurion with plausible answers. He talked in equivocal terms, and drew the business into a negotiation, while his secret despatches urged Rhadamistus, by any means, and without delay, to make himself master of the place. Pollio raised the price of his treachery, and Rhadamistus complied with his terms. In consequence of their bargain, the governor, by corrupt practices, contrived to make the soldiers demand a capitulation, and, if not granted, to threaten one and all to abandon the place. Mithridates, in that ex-

tremity, fixed the time and place for a congress, and went out of the garrison.

XLVII. Rhadamistus advanced to meet him. He rushed to the king's embrace; he offered every mark of duty and respect to his uncle and his father-in-law; and, by a solemn oath, assured him that he would not at any time employ either sword or poison against his life. He decoyed Mithridates into a neighbouring wood, where he said a sacrifice was prepared, to ratify the treaty in the presence of the gods. Among the eastern kings, whenever they enter into mutual engagements, a peculiar custom prevails: the contracting parties take each other by the right hand, and with a ligature bind their thumbs together, till the blood is forced to the extremities, and with a slight puncture finds a vent. As it gushes forth, the kings apply their mouths to the orifice, and suck each other's blood. The treaty, in this manner, receives the highest sanction, signed, as it were, with the blood of the parties. On the present occasion, the person, whose office it was to tie the knot, pretending to have made a false step, fell at the feet of Mithridates, and laying hold of his knees, brought him to the ground. A crowd rushed in and bound the prostrate king with fetters. A chain was fastened to his foot, and in that condition (esteemed by those nations the highest disgrace) he was dragged along with brutal violence. The populace, resenting the grievances which they had suffered under an oppressive and despotic reign, insulted him with vulgar scurrility, and even blows. Thinking men beheld the sad reverse with compassion. The wife of the unhappy monarch followed with her children, and filled the place with shrieks and lamentations. They were all secured in covered carriages, apart from each other, till the pleasure of Pharasmanes should be known. Lust of power was the passion of that prince. For a brother and a daughter not one tender sentiment remained. He ordered them to be put to death; but, though inured to crimes, not in his sight. Rhadamistus observed his oath with a pious fraud, that added to his guilt. He had bound himself not to use either sword or poison; but he smothered his uncle under a load of clothes, and by that evasion satisfied the reli-

gion of a murderer. The children of the unhappy monarch bewailed the loss of their father, and, for that crime, were massacred.

XLVIII. This act of treachery, and the murders that followed it, were soon made known to Quadratus. He called a council of war, and, after stating that the enemies of the deceased king were in possession of his dominions, the point which he submitted to consideration was, Whether, in that conjuncture, vindictive measures were advisable. Few at the meeting retained a sense of public honour. Maxims of policy and self-interest weighed with the majority. "The "guilt," they said, "of foreign nations gave a solid "advantage to the empire, and for that reason ought "to be a source of joy. To foment divisions among "the enemies of Rome was the truest wisdom; and, "with that view, the crown of Armenia had been often, "with a show of generosity, dealt out by the emperor "as the special gift of the Roman people. Let Rha- "damistus hold his ill-gotten power; he will hold it "with infamy, and the execration of mankind: while "he owes his elevation to his crimes, he will effec- "tually serve the interests of Rome." This reasoning prevailed. The council, however, wished to save appearances. That they might not be thought to countenance a foul transaction, which might afterwards provoke the emperor to issue contrary orders, it was agreed to send despatches to Pharasmanes, requiring him forthwith to evacuate Armenia, and recal his son.

XLIX. In that juncture, Julius Pelignus, with the title of procurator, commanded in Cappadocia; a man, whom all orders of the people beheld with contempt and derision. The deformity of his person excited ridicule, and the qualities of his mind corresponded with his outward figure. He had lived, notwithstanding, in the closest intimacy with Claudius, at the time when that prince, as yet a private man, passed the hours of a stupid and listless life in the company of buffoons. Pelignus, in a fit of vain-glory, undertook to recover Armenia. Having drawn together the auxiliaries of the province, he marched at the head of his forces, and, in his route, plundered the allies, as if the war was with them, instead of the Iberians. Ha-

ria, saw the danger of an impending war, and, to restore the public tranquillity, advanced at the head of his forces. The insurgents, who rose in arms against the Roman soldiers, were punished with death. That measure was soon decided; but the conduct of Felix and Cumanus held the general in suspense. Claudius, duly apprised of the rebellion, and the causes from which it sprung, sent a commission directing an inquiry, with power to try and pronounce judgment on the two provincial ministers. To make an end of all difficulties, Quadratus placed Felix on the tribunal among the judges, and, by that measure, sheltered him from his enemies. Cumanus was found guilty of the crimes committed by both, and in this manner the peace of the province was restored.

LV. Cilicia was soon after thrown into convulsions. The peasants of that country, known by the name of the Cliteans, a wild and savage race, inured to plunder and sudden commotions, assembled under Trosobor, a warlike chief, and pitched their camp on the summit of a mountain, steep, craggy, and almost inaccessible. From their fastnesses they came rushing down on the plain, and stretching along the coast, attacked the neighbouring cities. They plundered the people, robbed the merchants, and utterly ruined navigation and commerce. They laid siege to the city of Anemurium, and dispersed a body of horse, sent from Syria, under Curtius Severus, to the relief of the place. With that detachment the freebooters dared to hazard battle. The ground being rugged, disadvantageous to cavalry, and convenient only to foot soldiers, the Romans were totally routed. At length Antiochus, the reigning king of the country, appeased the insurrection. By popular arts he gained the good will of the multitude, and proceeded by stratagem against their leader. The confederates being ruined by disunion among themselves, Trosobor, with his principal adherents, was put to death. By conciliating measures the rest were brought to a sense of their duty.

LVI. It was about this time, that between the lake Fucinus and the river Liris, a passage was cut through a mountain. That a work of such magnificence

should be seen to advantage, Claudius exhibited on the lake a naval engagement, in imitation of Augustus, who formed an artificial basin on the banks of the Tiber, and gave a spectacle of the same kind, but with lighter vessels, and an inferior number of mariners. Ships of three and even four banks of oars were equipped by Claudius, with no less than nineteen thousand armed men on board. To prevent a deviation from the fight, the lake was fenced round with rafts of timber, leaving the intermediate space wide enough to give free play to the oars; ample room for the pilots to display their skill, and, in the attack, to exhibit the various operations of a sea-fight. The prætorian guards stood on the rafts of timber, ranged in their several companies. In their front, redoubts were raised, with proper engines for throwing up massy stones and all kinds of missive weapons. The rest of the lake was assigned to the ships. The mariners and combatants filled the decks. An incredible multitude of spectators from the neighbouring towns, and even from Rome, attracted by the spectacle, or with a view to pay their court to the emperor, crowded round the borders of the lake. The banks, the rising ground, the ridge of the adjacent hills, presented to the eye a magnificent scene, in the form of an amphitheatre. Claudius and Agrippina presided at the show; the prince in a superb coat of mail, and the empress in a splendid mantle, which was a complete tissue of entire gold. The fleet was manned with malefactors; but the battle, nevertheless, was fought with heroic bravery. After many wounds, and a great effusion of blood, to favour a set of men who had performed feats of valour, the survivors were excused from fighting to destruction.

LVII. The whole of this magnificent spectacle being concluded, the channel through which the waters flowed was laid open, and then it appeared with what little skill the work was executed. The bed was not sunk deep enough to gain a level either with the middle or the extremities of the lake. It was found necessary to clear away the ground, and give the current a freer course. The work was finished with expedition, and, to attract a multitude of spectators, bridges were

thrown over the lake, so constructed as to admit a foot engagement. On this prodigious platform a show of gladiators was exhibited. Near the mouth of the lake a sumptuous banquet was prepared; but the spot was ill-chosen. The weight of a vast body of water rushing down with irresistible force, carried away the contiguous parts of the works, and shook the whole fabric. Confusion and uproar filled the place. The roar of the torrent, and the noise of materials tumbling in, spread a general alarm. Claudius stood in astonishment. Agrippina seized the moment to accuse Narcissus, who had the direction of the whole. She imputed the mischief to his avarice. The favourite made reprisals on the character of Agrippina, condemning, without reserve, the impotence of a female spirit, her overbearing pride, and boundless ambition.

LVIII. Decimus Junius and Quintus Haterius succeeded to the consulship. In the course of the year, Nero, who had attained the age of sixteen, was joined in marriage to Octavia, the emperor's daughter. To grace his character with the fame of liberal science and the powers of eloquence, he undertook the cause of the inhabitants of Ilium. The young orator began with a deduction of the Roman people from a Trojan origin. Æneas, the founder of the Julian family, and other passages drawn from antiquity, but in their nature fabulous, served to embellish his discourse. He succeeded for his clients, and obtained an entire exemption from imposts of every kind. He was advocate also for the colony of the Bolognians, who had lately suffered by fire. By the rhetoric of their pleader they obtained a grant of one hundred thousand sesterces. The Rhodians, in like manner, were obliged to his talents. That people, after many vicissitudes, sometimes in full possession of their privileges, and occasionally deprived of all, as they happened to be friendly or adverse to the Roman arms, had their rights confirmed in the amplest manner. The city of Apamea, which had been damaged by an earthquake, owed to the eloquence of their advocate a suspension of all dues for the term of five years.

LIX. In a short time after, the conduct of Claudius, under the management of the wife, presented a con-

trast of cruelty to all these acts of benevolence. Agrippina panted for the gardens of Statilius Taurus. He had been proconsul of Africa, and possessed a brilliant fortune. Tarquitius Priscus had served under him as his lieutenant. At the instigation of Agrippina, this man preferred a charge against his superior officer, founded on some articles of extortion, but resting chiefly on the practice of magic arts. Taurus was fired with indignation at the perfidy of his colleague. Seeing himself devoted to destruction, he resolved not to wait the final sentence, and with his own hand delivered himself from the malice of his enemies. The prosecutor was expelled the senate. The members of that assembly, detesting the treachery of this vile informer, carried their point, in spite of the arts and secret influence of Agrippina.

LX. In the course of this year, the emperor gave to his favourite political maxim, the force of a law. He had often been heard to say, "that the judicial resolutions of the imperial procurators ought to be, in "their several provinces, of as high authority as if "they had been pronounced by himself." To show that this was not spoken in vain, the doctrine was confirmed by a decree that carried the principle to a greater extent than ever. By a regulation made by Augustus, the Roman knights, who ruled the provinces of Egypt were empowered, in all cases, to hear and determine with as full authority as the magistates of Rome. The rule was afterwards extended to other provinces, and, even at Rome, the jurisdiction of the knights embraced a variety of questions, which till then were cognizable by the prætor only. Claudius enlarged the powers of his favourites, and finally vested in that body the judicial authority, which had been for ages the cause of civil commotions; for which the people had shed their blood; and which, in those memorable struggles, was given by the Sempronian law to the equestrian order, till, in some time afterwards, the Servilian law restored it to the senate. In the wars between Marius and Sylla this was the cause of that fierce contention; but, in those turbulent times, the different orders of the state were engaged in factions against each other. The party that prevailed,

called itself the Public, and made laws in the name of the commonwealth. Caius Oppius and Cornelius Balbus, supported by Augustus, were the first who decided the rights of war and peace. To mention, after them, the names of Matius, Vedius, and others of the equestrian order, seems now entirely needless; since we find the enfranchised slaves of Claudius, men no higher than mere domestic servants, raised to a level with the prince, and armed with the authority of the laws.

LXI. A grant to the people of Coos, of a general immunity from taxes, was the next measure proposed by the emperor. He introduced the question with a splendid account of their ancient origin. "The Argives, "or at least, Cœus, the father of Latona, first settled "on the island. Æsculapius arrived soon after, and "carried with him the invention of medicine. That "useful science continued in his family through a long "line of descendants." He mentioned by name the several persons in regular succession, and the period of time in which they flourished. He added, that Zenophon, his own physician, was descended from that illustrious family. The exemption, therefore, now requested by a man of such distinguished eminence, ought to be granted, in favour of an island so famous in story, to the end that the inhabitants, free from every burthen, might dedicate themselves altogether to the worship of their God. A more substantial plea of merit might have been urged in their favour. They could boast, with truth, of singular services done to the Romans, and could set forth the victories obtained by their assistance; but Claudius, with his usual facility, chose to gratify the wishes of an individual, and, in his opinion, the favour which he conferred ought not to be varnished with considerations of a public nature.

LXII. The deputies from Byzantium were admitted to an audience before the senate. They prayed to be relieved from the heavy rates and duties under which they laboured. They relied on the merit of having been, for a length of time, the faithful allies of Rome. They traced the history of their services from the war in Macedonia, when the king of that country, on ac-

count of his degenerate character, was called Pseudophilippus, or Philip the False. They alleged, moreover, the succours which they set against Antiochus; against Perses, and Aristonicus; the assistance which they gave to Antony in the piratic war, and, afterwards, to Sylla, to Lucullus, and Pompey. Nor did they omit their zeal for the Cæsars at the time when they entered Byzantium, and found not only a free passage for their fleets and armies, but likewise a safe conveyance for their provisions and military stores.

LXIII. Byzantium, it is well known, stands at the extremity of Europe, on the narrow strait that separates Europe from Asia. The city was built by the Greeks, who were led to the spot by the Pythian Apollo. They consulted that oracle about the proper place for a new city, and received for answer, that they should choose a foundation directly opposite to the territory of the blind. The advice though dark and mysterious, pointed to the people of Chalcedon, the first adventurers in that part of the world, who had their opportunity to seize the best situation, and, through want of discernment, chose the worst. Byzantium enjoys many advantages: the soil is fertile, and the sea abounds with fish, occasioned by the prodigious shoals, that pour down from the Pontic sea, and, to avoid the rocks which lurk beneath the waves on the Chalcedonian coasts, make directly to the opposite shore, and fall into the bay of Byzantium. The fishery was at first a great branch of commerce. In process of time, the trade was cramped by excessive impositions; and to be relieved, either by a total extinction, or, at least, a reduction of the duties, was now the prayer of their petition. Claudius was inclined to favour their cause: in the late wars in Thrace and Bosphorus, they had suffered heavy losses; and it was, therefore, proper to grant them a compensation. They were accordingly freed from all duties for the term of five years.

LXIV. In the consulship of Marcus Asinius and Manius Acilius, a succession of prodigies kept the minds of men in constant dread of some violent convulsion in the state. The tents and ensigns of the soldiers were set on fire by a flash of lightning; a

swarm of bees settled on the capitol; women were delivered of monstrous births; and a pig, as soon as farrowed, had the talons of a hawk. It happened, at this time, that every order of the magistracy was short of its proper number, the public having lost by death, within a few months, a quæstor, an ædile, a tribune, a prætor, and a consul. This was reckoned among the prodigies. Amidst the consternation that covered the whole city, no person whatever was so seriously alarmed as Agrippina. Claudius, it seems, had said in conversation, that, by some fatality, it had been his constant lot to bear, for a time, the irregularities of his wives, and in the end to punish them. The expression fell from him in his liquor. Agrippina knew the force of it, and resolved to take her measures beforehand. But Domitia Lepida, whom she hated for female reasons, was to be the first devoted victim. She was the daughter of the younger Antonia, great niece to Augustus, and sister to Cneius Domitius, the first husband of the empress. Proud of these advantages, Lepida considered herself no way inferior to the imperial consort. Their age, their beauty, and their riches were nearly on a level; both of dissolute manners, proud, fierce, lascivious, and in their vices, no less than their views of ambition, determined rivals. Which of them should have entire dominion over the mind of Nero, the aunt or the mother, was the point in dispute between them. Lepida made her approaches to the young prince by affability and softness of manners. Her liberality and endearing tenderness gained the affections of the prince. Agrippina behaved with the authority of a mother, eager to grasp the imperial dignity for her son, and, when she gained it, unwilling to own him for her sovereign.

LXV. A charge was framed against Lepida, importing, "That by magic arts she aspired to the emperor's "bed, and, by neglecting to bridle the insolence of "her numerous slaves in Calabria, she showed her-"self an enemy to the peace of Italy." She was condemned to die. Narcissus endeavoured to avert the sentence; but his efforts were ineffectual. That minister had for some time beheld Agrippina with deep mistrust. He saw through her designs, and, to his

select friends, did not scruple to declare, "That what-
"ever became of the succession, whether it devolved
"on Nero or Britannicus, the dilemma would either
"way be fatal to himself. He was bound, however,
"to the emperor by ties of gratitude, and in his ser-
"vice was ready to lay down his life. It was by his
"counsels that Silius and Messalina were both un-
"done. Should Nero seize the sovereignty, the
"crimes of his mother might bring forward the same
"catastrophe; and if Britannicus succeeded to the
"empire, with that prince he had no claim of merit.
"At present a step mother plans the ruin of the impe-
"rial house. To look on in silence, and yield to her
"towering ambition, were a more flagitious crime,
"than to have connived at the vices of the emperor's
"former wife. But the vices of the former wife are
"now renewed by Agrippina. Her adulterous com-
"merce with Pallas is too well known; and it is
"equally known, that her modesty, her fame, her
"honour, and even her person, all are subservient to
"her ambition." Such was the language of Narcis-
sus. In the warmth of his emotions he embraced Bri-
tannicus; he hoped to see him grow up to man's
estate; he fixed his eyes on the prince; he lifted up
his hands to the gods, devoutly praying that he might
live to crush the enemies of his father, even though
all, who took an active part against his mother, should
be doomed to perish with them.

LXVI. In the midst of these distractions, Claudius was attacked by a fit of illness. For the recovery of his health he set out for Sinuessa, to try the effect of a milder air, and the salubrious waters of the place. Agrippina thought she had now an opportunity to execute the black design which she had long since harboured in her breast. Instruments of guilt were ready at her beck, but the choice of the poison was still to be considered: if quick and sudden in its operation, the treachery would be manifest: a slow corrosive would bring on a lingering death. In that case, the danger was, that the conspiracy might, in the interval, be detected, or, in the weakness and decay of nature, the affections of a father might return, and plead in favour of Britannicus. She resolved to try a com-

pound of new and exquisite ingredients, such as would make directly to the brain, yet not bring on an immediate dissolution. A person of well-known skill in the trade of poisoning was chosen for the business. This was the famous Locusta; a woman lately condemned as a dealer in clandestine practices, but reserved among the instruments of state to serve the purposes of dark ambition. By this tool of iniquity the mixture was prepared. The hand to administer it was that of Halotus, the eunuch, whose business it was to serve the emperor's table, and taste the viands for his master.

LXVII. The particulars of this black conspiracy transpired in some time after, and found their way into the memoirs of the age. We are told by the writers of that day, that a palatable dish of mushrooms was the vehicle of the poison. The effect was not soon perceived. Through excess of wine or the stupidity of his nature, perhaps the strength of his constitution, Claudius remained insensible. An effort of nature followed, and gave him some relief. Agrippina trembled for herself. To dare boldly was now her best expedient. Regardless of her fame, and all that report could spread abroad, she had recourse to Zenophon, the physician, whom she had seduced to her interest. Under pretence of assisting Claudius to unload his stomach, this man, it is said, made use of a feather tinged with the most subtile poison, and with that instrument searched the emperor's throat. With the true spirit of an assassin he knew, that, in atrocious deeds, a feeble attempt serves only to confound the guilty, while the deed, executed with courage, consummates all, and is sure to earn the wages of iniquity.

LXVIII. Meanwhile, the senate was convened, and, though the emperor had breathed his last, the consuls and the pontiffs joined in vows and supplications for his recovery. Medical preparations were still applied to a lifeless body, and the farce of attending the sick was continued, till proper measures were taken for the succession of Nero. Agrippina, with a dejected mien, affected to sink under the weight of affliction. She looked round for consolation, and seeing Britannicus, she folded him in her arms, and called him,

with expressions of tenderness, the image of his father She detained him with fond caresses, and never suffered him to leave the apartment. With the same deceitful arts she contrived to decoy his two sisters, Antonia and Octavia. The avenues of the palace were closely guarded, and, at intervals, favourable accounts of the emperor were issued, the better to keep every thing in suspense, and amuse the hopes and fears of the soldiers, till the arrival of the propitious moment, promised by the Chaldæan astrologers.

LXIX. At length, on the third day before the ides of October, about noon, the palace gates were thrown open. A prætorian cohort, as usual, was drawn up under arms. Nero, attended by Burrhus, made his appearance, and, on a signal given by the commanding officer, the soldiers received him with shouts and acclamations. He was immediately put into a litter. Some of the soldiers, we are told, even in that scene of joy and uproar, looked around for Britannicus, and asked in vain for that unfortunate prince. None of his party appearing, they yielded to the impulse of the moment. Nero was conveyed to the camp. He addressed the soldiers in a speech suited to the occasion, and promised a donative, equal to the liberality of his deceased father. He was proclaimed Emperor of Rome. The voice of the army was confirmed by the senate. The provinces acquiesced without reluctance. Divine honours were decreed to the memory of Claudius, and funeral ceremonies, not inferior to the magnificence that attended the remains of Augustus. In this article, Agrippina was willing to vie with the pomp displayed by her great-grandmother Livia. The will of the deceased emperor was not read in public. The preference given to the son of his wife, in prejudice to the rights of his own immediate issue, might raise a spirit of discontent, and alienate the affections of the people.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

Lanpsacus.

nowy 120.

achilleyy 126

Phrenix 129